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THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK,

BY

ALEXANDER POPE, ESQ;

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

3335
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LONDON,
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THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK XIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The discovery of Ulysses to Euryclea.

Ulysses and his son remove the weapons out of the armory. Ulysses in the conversation with Penelope gives a fictitious account of his adventures; then assures her he had formerly entertained her husband in Crete; and describes exactly his person and dress, affirms to have heard of him in Phæacia and Thesprotia, and that his return is certain, and within a month. He then goes to bathe, and is attended by Euryclea, who discovers him to be Ulysses by the scar upon his leg, which he formerly received in hunting the wild boar on Parnassus. The poet inserts a digression, relating that accident, with all its particulars.

CONSULTING secret with the blue-ey'd maid,
Still in the dome divine Ulysses stay'd:
Revenge mature for act inflam'd his breast;
And thus the son the fervent sire addrest.

The scene still continues in the palace of Ulysses; but new persons are introduced to carry on the action, and diversify the story. This book opens with a repetition from the sixteenth; the ancients marked it with an asterism, without any obelisk, to shew that it was here inserted with propriety: as we draw nearer to the conclusion of the poem, the repetitions are more frequent. Virgil has ge-

Inſtant convey thoſe ſteely ſtores of war
To diſtant rooms, diſpos'd with ſecret care:
The cauſe demanded by the ſuitor-train,
To ſoothe their fears a ſpecious reaſon feign:
Say, ſince Ulyſſes left his natal coaſt,
Obſcene with ſmoke, their beamy luſtre loſt,
His arms deform'd, the roof they won't adorn:
From the glad walls inglorious lumber torn.
Suggeſt, that Jove the peaceful thought inſpir'd,
Leſt they by ſight of ſwords to fury fir'd,
Diſhoneſt wounds, or violence of ſoul,
Defame the bridal feaſt, and friendly bowl.

nerally avoided them, and indeed it may be obſerved, that theſe two poets differ in nothing more than the manner of their elocution: Virgil is full, but Homer even overflows; and this agrees with their general characters. Homer is like thoſe painters of whom Apelles uſed to complain, that they left nothing to be imagined by the ſpectator, and made too accurate repreſentations; but Virgil is like Timantes in Pliny. *Timanti plurimum adfuit ingenii, in omnibus operibus ejus intelligitur plus ſemper quam pingitur:* and again, *oſtendit etiam quæ occultat.*

Euſtathius obſerves, that the unexpected opportunity to remove the arms in the abſence of the ſuitors, occaſions this repetition; in the ſixteenth book Ulyſſes told Telemachus he would give a ſign when he ſhould make the removal, deſpairing of an opportunity to give a public direction, without danger from the ſuitors: he therefore wiſely lays hold of the preſent hour which happily favours his deſires, and injoins the arms to be removed immediately.

The prince obedient to the ſage command,
To Euryclea thus: the female band
In their apartments keep; ſecure the doors:
Theſe ſwarthy arms among the covert ſtores
Are ſeemlier hid; my thoughtleſs youth they blame,
Imbrown'd with vapour of the ſmould'ring flame.
In happy hour (pleas'd Euryclea cries)
Tutor'd by early woes, grow early wiſe!
Inſpect with ſharpen'd ſight, and frugal care,
Your patrimonial wealth, a prudent heir.
But who the lighted taper will provide,
(The female train retir'd) your toils to guide?
Without infringing hoſpitable right,
This gueſt (he cry'd) ſhall bear the guiding light:
I cheer no lazy vagrants with repaſt;
They ſhare the meal that earn it ere they taſte.
He ſaid; from female ken ſhe ſtrait ſecures
The purpos'd deed, and guards the bolted doors:
Auxiliar to his ſon, Ulyſſes bears
The plumy-creſted helms, and pointed ſpears
With ſhields indented deep in glorious wars.
Minerva viewleſs on her charge attends,
And with her golden lamp his toil befriends:

v. 18. ——*the female band*
In their apartments keep, etc.]
It is not without ſufficient reaſon that Telemachus diſtruſts the maids; many of them were in the intereſt of the ſuitors: it was therefore neceſſary to conceal the place to which the arms were conveyed, leſt they ſhould betray the ſecret. Euſtathius.
v. 38. ——*Minerva*——*with her golden lamp.*——]

Not such the sickly beams, which unsincere,
Gild the gross vapour of this nether sphere!
A present deity the prince confess'd,
And rapt with ecstacy the sire address'd.

What miracle thus dazzles with surprize!
Distinct in rows the radiant columns rise:

The office here ascribed to Minerva gave great offence to Rapin, and he censured it as mean, and unworthy of the goddess; but Eustathius fully vindicates Homer; Pallas is here an allegorical deity, intended by the poet to express the wisdom of Ulysses; he acts with as much prudence as if Minerva herself guided him in all his ways. We are to gather from this description, that Ulysses formed all the actions of this night with the utmost wisdom, or according to the Greek proverb, ἐν νυκτὶ βελὴ, the *counsels of this night* were regulated with the exactest prudence and secresy. Spondanus observes, that Callimachus, a statuary in Athens, made an image of Minerva according to this picture in Homer: She held a lamp of gold, which was filled with an oil of such an unwasting nature, as not to want to be repleniſhed in the space of a whole year. See *lib.* 1. of Pausanias. Dacier judges, that though a lamp was unknown in the days of Ulysses, yet it might not be so in the days of Homer, and therefore he might speak of it; for instance, the trumpet was not known in the Trojan war, yet Homer mentions it, because it was used in his age. But this is no answer; for Homer does not say that the trumpet was used during the siege of Troy; if he had he would have been guilty of a gross anachronism, but he speaks of it by way of allusion, as a thing well known in his time. Here therefore the case is different, for Ulysses is the person who is supposed to make use of this lamp, and Dacier allows that it was unknown in his age, and consequently he ought not to use it at all. It may therefore perhaps be most probable, that Callimachus did not form his statue from this original; or if this

The walls where-e'er my wond'ring sight I turn,
And roofs, amidst a blaze of glory burn!
Some visitant of pure ethereal race,
With his bright presence deigns the dome to grace.
Be calm, replies the sire; to none impart,
But oft revolve the vision in thy heart:

be not allowed, that he fell into an error, and gave the goddess a lamp instead of a torch.

I will only further add, that this office of Minerva may be vindicated from all meanness, by observing that it is not the bare act of carrying the torch which the goddess here executes; she improves it into a miracle; the whole palace is enlightened with a celestial fire, and Ulysses and Telemachus gather full assurances of her favour and success from that miraculous illumination: this circumstance raises the description out of lowness into dignity.

v. 48. *Some visitant of pure ethereal race.*] Eustathius gives us a twofold explication of the words,

Αυτὴ τοι δίκη ἐστὶ θεῶν———

They imply either that the goddess Themis descended; or that it is the custom of celestial powers to manifest themselves in such illuminations, without appearing visibly. The latter interpretation seems most natural, and makes the construction easy, whereas the other is scarce to be understood without supplying ἀπὸ before θεῶν: otherwise it must be allowed, that the former opinion is not unhappy: Ulysses tells his son, that the goddess of justice is sent by the gods to assist him in taking vengeance on the suitors: Themis is a very proper deity to be introduced upon such an occasion, and shews that Ulysses proceeds upon the strictest rules of equity, in the distribution of his rewards and punishments. But the passage will not admit this sense, it being evidently Pallas, not Themis, who appears.

Celeſtials, mantled in exceſs of light,
Can viſit unapproach'd by mortal ſight.
Seek thou repoſe; whilſt here I ſole remain,
T' explore the conduct of the female train:
The penſive queen perchance deſires to know
The ſeries of my toils, to ſoothe her woe:
With tapers flaming day his train attends,
His bright alcove th' obſequious youth aſcends:
Soft ſlumbrous ſhades his drooping eye-lids cloſe,
'Till on her eaſtern throne Aurora glows.
Whilſt, forming plans of death, Ulyſſes ſtay'd,
In council ſecret with the martial maid;
Attendant nymphs in beauteous order wait
The queen, deſcending from her bow'r of ſtate.
Her cheeks the warmer bluſh of Venus wear,
Chaſten'd with coy Diana's penſive air.
An ivory ſeat with ſilver ringlets grac'd,
By fam'd Icmalius wrought, the menials plac'd:
With ivory ſilver'd thick the foot-ſtool ſhone,
O'er which the panther's various hide was thrown.
The ſovereign ſeat with graceful air ſhe preſs'd;
To different taſks their toil the nymphs addreſs'd:

v. 69. *By fam'd Icmalius wrought* ———] Homer in both his poems takes all opportunities of celebrating the famous artiſans of antiquity: I doubt not but moſt of them were his particular friends, and to do them honour, he gave them place in his works, and rendered their names and his own gratitude immortal. We may likewiſe learn the nature of the nobleſt pieces of art in Homer's days from his poetry.

The golden goblets ſome, and ſome reſtor'd
From ſtains of luxury the poliſh'd board:
Theſe to remove th' expiring embers came,
While thoſe with unctuous fir foment the flame.
'Twas then Melantho with imperious mein
Renew'd th' attack, incontinent of ſpleen:
Avaunt, ſhe cry'd, offenſive to my ſight!
Deem not in ambuſh here to lurk by night,
Into the woman-ſtate aſquint to pry;
A day-devourer, and an ev'ning ſpy!
Vagrant, begone! before this blazing brand
Shall urge——and wav'd it hiſſing in her hand.
Th' inſulted heroe rouls his wrathful eyes,
And, why, ſo turbulent of ſoul? he cries;
Can theſe lean ſhrivel'd limbs unnerv'd with age,
Theſe poor but honeſt rags, enkindle rage?
In crowds we wear the badge of hungry fate,
And beg, degraded from ſuperior ſtate!
Conſtrain'd! a rent-charge on the rich I live;
Reduc'd to crave the good I once could give:

v. 82. *Into the woman-ſtate aſquint to pry.*] This is the true reaſon why Melantho is out of humour (ſays madam Dacier:) ſhe had ſome affairs upon her hands, which demanded no witneſſes, meaning the vicious commerce between her and Eurymachus. Women never forgive their own ſex a frailty. Dacier is undoubtedly in an error; Eurymachus in the end of the laſt book left the palace, and therefore Melantho could not ſpeak out of any apprehenſions of having a ſtop put to her affairs this night by the preſence of Ulyſſes.

A palace, wealth, and slaves, I late possess'd,
And all that makes the great be call'd the bless'd:
My gate, an emblem of my open soul,
Embrac'd the poor, and dealt a bounteous dole.
Scorn not the sad reverse, injurious maid!
'Tis Jove's high will, and be his will obey'd!
Nor think thyself exempt: that rosy prime
Must share the general doom of with'ring time:
To some new channel soon, the changeful tide
Of royal grace th' offended queen may guide;
And her lov'd Lord unplume thy tow'ring pride.
Or were he dead, 'tis wisdom to beware:
Sweet blooms the prince beneath Apollo's care;
Your deeds with quick impartial eye surveys;
Potent to punish what he cannot praise.]

v. 106. *Sweet blooms the prince beneath Apollo's care.*] It may be asked why Telemachus is said to owe the preservation of his life to Apollo? Eustathius answers, that he was called Ὁ θεὸς κουροτρόφος by antiquity; and that Daphne from being his favourite was named κουροθαλέα: But perhaps that epithet was appropriated to Apollo, because all immature deaths in the male sex were ascribed to him, as they were to Diana in the female; it may therefore be said with great propriety that it is owing to the favour of Apollo, that Telemachus had not died an immature death, or that he was arrived to manhood: Eustathius adds, that Apollo, as he is the sun, may be called the nourisher of all things that breathe, as well as of the inanimate creation; it is owing to his influence that every being comes to maturity, and in this sense likewise he may be called κουροτρόφος. What Eustathius ascribes to Daphne, Dacier applies to Diana, and tells us, that she was called Κουροθαλέια, and that the ancients ce-

Her keen reproach had reach'd the ſov'reign's ear;
Loquacious inſolent! ſhe cries, forbear:
To thee the purpoſe of my ſoul I told,
Venial diſcourſe unblam'd with him to hold.
The ſtoried labours of my wand'ring Lord,
To ſoothe my grief, he haply may record:
Yet him, my gueſt, thy venom'd rage hath ſtung;
Thy head ſhall pay the forfeit of thy tongue!

lebrated a feſtival in her honour for the health of their infants.

v. 110. *Loquacious inſolent*——] Were this place to be rendered literally, it would be thus, *Thou bold impudent bitch*; θαρθσαλέη κύον αδδεὲς. It is ſpoken by Penelope. In our age it is an expreſſion ſo vulgar, as not to be uttered in common converſation, much leſs in epic poetry: it is true it fully expreſſes the height of impudence, and in Homer's time it was no more mean, than calling a coward a *deer*, and both the expreſſions are joined together in the firſt of the Iliad.

Thou dog in forehead, but in heart a deer.

It is there ſpoken by Achilles: and in another place of the Iliad Jupiter applies it to his wife, and calls Juno an impudent bitch: a plain indication that the expreſſion was not mean, as it is at this day, becauſe it was uſed by the greateſt of heroes, and the ſupreme of Gods.

v. 116. *Thy head shall pay the forfeit of thy tongue.*] The expreſſion in the Greek is remarkable.

——Ὃ σῇ κεφαλῇ αναμαξεις.

which you shall wipe upon your own head, or as Euſtathius explains it, "a crime which you ſhall make to cleave "to your own head:" a ſimilar expreſſion (adds the ſame author) occurs in Sophocles.

——κἀπι λȣτροῖσιν κἀρα
Κηλῖδας ἐξέμαξεν.

But thou on whom my palace-cares depend,
Eurynome, regard the ſtranger friend:
A ſeat ſoft ſpread with furry ſpoils prepare,
Due-diſtant for us both to ſpeak and hear.
The menial fair obeys with duteous haſte:
A ſeat adorn'd with furry ſpoils ſhe plac'd:
Due diſtant for diſcourſe the heroe ſate;
When thus the ſov'reign from her chair of ſtate:
Reveal, obſequious to my firſt demand,
Thy name, thy lineage, and thy natal land.
He thus: O queen! whoſe far-reſounding fame,
Is bounded only by the ſtarry frame:
Conſummate pattern of imperial ſway,
Whoſe pious rule a warlike race obey!
In wavy gold thy ſummer vales are dreſs'd;
Thy autumns bend with copious fruit oppreſs'd:
With flocks and herds each graſſy plain is ſtor'd;
And fiſh of ev'ry ſin thy ſeas afford:

From whence it appears, that the blood that was found upon the ſword was wiped upon the head of the ſlain; an intimation that his own blood was fallen upon the head of the deceaſed, and the living were free from it. This is a very remarkable cuſtom, and there are many expreſſions like it in the ſcriptures; namely, *his blood be upon his own head.* It was cuſtomary among the Romans to waſh their hands, in token of innocence and purity from blood: thus the Roman governor waſhed his hands, and ſaid, *I am innocent of the blood of this juſt perſon.*

v. 129. *Conſummate pattern of imperial ſway.*] Homer here gives an amiable picture of a mild and juſt government: it is a truth certain and univerſal, where the ſubject enjoys the fruits of his induſtry, the earth will al-

Their affluent joys the grateful realms confeſs;
And bleſs the pow'r that ſtill delights to bleſs.
Gracious permit this pray'r, imperial dame!
Forbear to know my lineage, or my name:
Urge not this breaſt to heave, theſe eyes to weep;
In ſweet oblivion let my ſorrow ſleep!
My woes awak'd will violate your ear;
And to this gay cenſorious train, appear
A winy vapour melting in a tear.
Their gifts the gods reſum'd (the queen rejoin'd.)
Exterior grace, and energy of mind;
When the dear partner of my nuptial joy,
Auxiliar troops combin'd, to conquer Troy.
My lord's protecting hand alone would raiſe
My drooping verdure, and extend my praiſe!
Peers from the diſtant Samian ſhore reſort;
Here with Dulichians join'd, beſiege the court:
Zacynthus, green with ever ſhady groves,
And Ithaca, preſumptuous boaſt their loves:
Obtruding on my choice a ſecond lord,
They preſs the Hymenæan rite abhorr'd.

ways be well cultivated, and bring forth in abundance; the ſea will furniſh the land with plenty of fiſhes, and men will plant when they are ſure to gather the fruits. It is the conſtant obſervation of all travellers, that the worſt ſituation under an eaſy government enjoys more plenty, and is fuller of inhabitants, than the beſt ſoil and happieſt ſituation under an arbitrary power. This whole paſſage is very beautiful, and the more beautiful becauſe the words proceed from the mouth of a king.

Miſ-rule thus mingling with domeſtic cares,
I live regardleſs of my ſtate affairs:
Receive no ſtranger gueſt, no poor relieve;
But ever for my lord in ſecret grieve!——
This art, inſtinct by ſome celeſtial pow'r,
I try'd, eluſive of the bridal hour:
" Ye peers, I cry, who preſs to gain a heart,
" Where dead Ulyſſes claims no future part;
" Rebate your loves, each rival ſuit ſuſpend,
" 'Till this funereal web my labours end:
" Ceaſe, till to good Laertes I bequeath
" A pall of ſtate, the ornament of death.
" For when to fate he bows, each Grecian dame
" With juſt reproach were licens'd to defame;
" Should he, long honour'd in ſupreme command,
" Want the laſt duties of a daughter's hand."
The fiction pleas'd! their loves I long elude;
The night ſtill ravell'd, what the day renew'd;
Three years ſucceſsful in my art conceal'd,
My ineffectual fraud the fourth reveal'd:
Befriended by my own domeſtic ſpies,
The woof unwrought the ſuitor-train ſurprize.
From nuptial rites they now no more recede,
And fear forbids to falſify the brede.
My anxious parents urge a ſpeedy choice,
And to their ſuffrage gain the filial voice:
For rule mature, Telemachus deplores
His dome diſhonour'd, and exhauſted ſtores——
But ſtranger! as thy days ſeem full of fate,
Divide diſcourſe, in turn thy birth relate:

Thy port asserts thee of distinguish'd race;
No poor unfather'd product of disgrace.
Princess! he cries, renew'd by your command,
The dear remembrance of my native land,
Of secret grief unseals the fruitful source;
And tears repeat their long forgotten course!
So pays the wretch, whom fate constrains to roam,
The dues of nature to his natal home!——
But inward on my soul let sorrow prey;
Your sovereign will my duty bids obey.
Crete awes the circling waves, a fruitful soil!
And ninety cities crown the sea-born isle:

v. 196. *etc. Crete*———] It is not without a good reason that Ulysses is so particular in the geography of Crete; he does it, that Penelope, from the knowledge of the truth which he speaks concerning that island, may be induced to give the readier credit to his succeeding fictions. In the Iliad, Homer calls Crete ἑκατόμπολις, or the island with an hundred cities, lib. 2.

Crete's hundred cities pour forth all her sons.

Here he affirms it to have no more than ninety. Strabo is very full upon this difficulty, lib. 10. Ephorus (says that author) judges that ten cities were built by the Dorians after the Trojan war, under Althæmenes; and therefore Ulysses here mentions Crete as having only ninety: but this opinion carries no probability. Others affirm, that ten cities were demolished by the enemies of Idomeneus; but this is no more than a conjecture: the truth is, Homer does not affirm that there were an hundred cities in the time of the war with Troy, but in his own age; for the poet in that place speaks in his own person; if he had put the words into the mouth of any one who had lived in the time of the war he would not

Mix'd with her genuine ſons, adopted names
In various tongues avow their various claims:

have called it the iſle of the hundred, but ninety cities, according to this deſcription of Ulyſſes; it being very improbable, that ten of the Cretan cities ſhould be deſtroyed, either during the war, or after the return of Idomeneus; for Homer himſelf teſtifies that he returned ſafe to Crete with all his ſoldiers, lib. 3. of the Odyſſey.

And thoſe whom Idomen from Ilion's plain
Had led, ſecurely croſt the dreadful main.

And therefore he had ſufficient forces to defend his country: but though we allow that theſe ten cities had been deſtroyed after his return, yet how could Ulyſſes come to the knowledge of it, having neither been in Crete, nor met with any Cretan to inform him in all his voyages? It is therefore probable that in the time of the Trojan war Crete had no more than ninety cities, but an hundred in the days of Homer: and thus fully reconciles the Iliad with the Odyſſey; in the Odyſſey it is Ulyſſes that ſpeaks, in the Iliad, Homer.

Virgil ſpeaks of Crete after the manner of Homer.

Creta Jovis magni medio jacet inſula ponto
Centum urbes habitant magnas, uberrima regna.

The other ten cities were built by the Dorians (as Ephorus writes) under Althæmenes.

v. 199. *In various tongues* ———] The meaning of this is, that the natural inhabitants of Crete were mixed with ſtrangers who had ſettled in the Iſland; or as ſome imagine (ſays Euſtathius) Ulyſſes ſpeaks thus out of fear, leſt Penelope ſhould diſcover him not to be a native of Crete from his wrong pronunciation of the language of the Cretans. We may gather from Strabo, that the Dorians inhabited the eaſtern parts, the Cydonians the weſtern, the Eteo-Cretans the ſouthern, and the reſt

Cydonians, dreadful with the bended yew,
And bold Pelasgi boast a native's due:
The Dorians, plum'd amid the files of war,
Her foodful glebe with fierce Achaians share;
Cnossus, her capital of high command;
Where sceptred Minos with impartial hand
Divided right; each ninth revolving year
By Jove receiv'd, in council to confer.

of the nation, being most powerful, possest the plain country lying towards the north: the Eteo-Cretans, that is, the true Cretans, were the original inhabitants of the island, and probably also the Cydonians. There is some difficulty in the word τριχάϊκες. Andron the historian (continues Strabo) affirms, that the Dorians who lived near Parnassus planted a colony in Crete, and built three cities, and from thence called themselves τριχάϊκες, *quasi tripartiti*. But Strabo rejects this opinion of Andron, for these Dorians possessed four cities, and their country was called τετράπολις; he therefore believes them to have taken that name from a triple crest, or from having them adorned with hair after the manner of a plumage, from τρίχες signifying *hair*. But perhaps Strabo is in a mistake; for Thucydides, lib. 1. p. 107. and Diodorus, lib. 11. p. 60. confirm the opinion of Andron. The words of Strabo have given great trouble to the commentators, and they ingenuously confess they cannot understand them. The expression is τριχίνας λόφας ἐφαμίλας: the difficulty lies in ἐφαμίλας; but if we read the sentence thus, all will be plain, τριχίνας λόφας, ἢ ἐφαμίλλας, that is, crests adorned with hair, or something like it, from ἐφάμιλλος, *æqualis*. Dacier.

v. 206.——*Each ninth revolving year*, etc.] This Minos, king of Crete, was an excellent lawgiver; and as Ephorus writes, (says Strabo) to give his laws the great-

His ſon Deucalion bore ſucceſſive ſway;
His ſon, who gave me firſt to view the day!

er veneration, he uſed to deſcend into a cave ſacred to Jupiter, and pretend that he had there received them from the mouth of that deity; this is the reaſon why Homer tells us he converſed with Jupiter. Thus alſo Numa Pompilius boaſted of the ſame favour from Ægeria, to make his decrees to be received by the Romans. The only difficulty is in the word ἐννέωρος; and it has been generally believed to imply, that Minos continued in the cave of Jupiter nine whole years; but Caſaubon remarks, that it never ſignifies nine years, but every ninth year; as τρίταιος does not mean three days, but the third day: and this agrees exactly with the hiſtory of Minos, (ſee Valerius Maximus, lib. 1. cap. 2.) who was accuſtomed to review and rectify all his laws every ninth year. Plato quotes this paſſage in his piece, entitled Minos, and puts this laſt obſervation beyond all diſpute: 'Homer tells us 'ſays that author) that Minos converſed with Jupiter 'every ninth year, ἐνάτῳ ἔτει, and went to be inſtructed 'by him as a ſcholar by a maſter;' and a little lower he adds, ἐφοίτα δὲ ἐνάτῳ ἔτει εἰς ἄντρον Διὸς ὁ Μίνως, etc. that is, 'he went into the cave of Jupiter, to learn new 'laws, or to reform the old which he had received in 'the former period,' τῇ πρόσθεν ἐννεαετηρίδι. This Minos was the moſt juſt of all mankind, and for this reaſon was ſuppoſed to be made one of the infernal judges. Plutarch in the life of Demetrius makes a fine remark upon this deſcription of Minos; 'Homer (ſays he) has not honour-'ed with the glorious title of the diſciple of Jupiter, the 'greateſt warrior or oppreſſor, or a renowned tyrant; 'but the man famous for his juſtice and probity, a legiſ-'lator, and a benefactor to mankind.' Dacier.

v. 207. *By Jove receiv'd, in council to confer.*] The word in the Greek is ὀαριστής, and Plato fully explains it in his Minos; ὄαρος is the diſcourſe, ὀαριστὴς the perſon who diſcourſes; ὁ συνουσιαστὴς ἐν λόγοις: others (continues

The royal bed an elder iſſue bleſt,
Idomeneus, whom Ilion fields atteſt
Of matchleſs deed: untrain'd to martial toil
I liv'd inglorious in my native iſle,
Studious of my peace; and Æthon is my name.
'Twas then to Crete the great Ulyſſes came;
For elemental war, and wintry Jove,
From Malea's guſty cape his navy drove
To bright Lucina's fane; the ſhelfy coaſt
Where loud Amniſus in the deep is loſt.

Plato) underſtand it to ſignify the gueſt of Jupiter, συμπότην, συμπαιστὴν, a perſon that was admitted to the table of Jupiter, or a partaker in his diverſions; but the falſity of this opinion (adds he) will ſufficiently appear, if we remember, that of all the Greeks, the Cretans and Lacedæmonians who learned it from them, alone abſtain from compotations, and diverſions ariſing from them; and in particular this is one of the laws of Minos enacted in Crete, μὴ συμπίνειν ἀλλήλοις ἐις μεθήν, commanding the Cretans not to drink in their entertainments to exceſs. Thus far Dacier; to which I ſhall add that this remark of Plato may perhaps contribute greatly to the glory of Minos, but gives little honour to Jupiter; it inſinuates that a perſon who drinks with that deity, might endanger his ſobriety; otherwiſe to be admitted to the table of Jupiter is an inſtance of favour and familiarity, and would have been an honour to Minos. Horace is of this opinion, for ſpeaking of Tantalus, lib. 1. Carm. he mentions it as a peculiar teſtimony of favour;

Occidit et Pelopis genitor, conviva deorum.

That is, according to Homer's expreſſion, θεῶν συνουσιαστὴς or συμπότης.

v. 218. *To bright Lucina's fane*———] Strabo

His veſſels moor'd, (an incommodious port!)
The hero ſpeeded to the Cnoſſian court:
Ardent the partner of his arms to find;
In leagues of long commutual friendſhip join'd.
Vain hope! ten ſuns had warm'd the weſtern ſtrand,
Since my brave brother with his Cretan band
Had ſail'd for Troy: but to the genial feaſt
My honour'd roof receiv'd the royal gueſt:
Beeves for his train the Cnoſſian peers aſſign,
A public treat, with jars of gen'rous wine.
Twelve days, while Boreas vex'd th' aereal ſpace,
My hoſpitable dome he deign'd to grace:

informs us, that upon the Amniſſus there is a cave ſacred to Ilythia, or Lucina, who preſides over childbirth. The reaſon given by Euſtathius why the poet places the cave by that river is too frivolous to be recited: it is probable that it was called the cave of Ilythia, becauſe ſome great lady had made uſe of it, upon an occaſion in which women invoke the aſſiſtance of that goddeſs; or perhaps becauſe water is one of the great principles of generation, the temple of Lucina could not be placed in a more proper ſituation, than upon the banks of a river, and cloſe by the ſea. Dacier.

v. 228. *Beeves for his train the Cnoſſian peers aſſign,*
A public treat———]

It was not to be expected, and indeed it was almoſt impoſſible that one perſon ſhould entertain Ulyſſes and his whole fleet, which conſiſted of twelve veſſels. This paſſage therefore gives us a remarkable cuſtom of antiquity, which was, that when any perſon with too great a number of attendants arrived in other countries, the prince received the chief perſonage and his particular friends, and the reſt were entertained at the public expence. Dacier.

And when the north had ceas'd the ſtormy roar,
He wing'd his voyage to the Phrygian ſhore.

Thus the fam'd heroe, perfected in wiles,
With fair ſimilitude of truth beguiles
The queen's attentive ear: diſſolv'd in woe,
From her bright eyes the tears unbounded flow.
As ſnows collected on the mountain freeze;
When milder regions breathe a vernal breeze,

v. 135. *With fair ſimilitude of truth beguiles.*] The word in the Greek is ἴσκει, which has been uſually interpreted to be the ſame with ἔλεγε: but thoſe that ſpeak with more exactneſs derive it from ἴσκω, ἔικαζεν, ἀπεικονίζων πρὸς ἀλήθειαν, that is, he accommodated and adapted his fictions to probability or truth; and Heſychius explains the ſame word by ἐικάζω, ὁμοιῶ: Horace almoſt literally tranſlates this verſe.

Atque ita mentitur, ſic veris falſa remiſcit,
Primo ne medium, medio ne diſcrepat imum.

And indeed in this line the whole art of an epic poem is comprehended, which is a mixture of truths and fictions, but fictions conformable to verity; or to ſpeak in the language of a critic, the fable of the epic poem ſhould be both probable and marvellous; aſtoniſhing, yet credible: if it be only credible, it differs in nothing from hiſtory; if only marvellous, it is no better than a romance. The great ſecret therefore of an epic writer is to produce in the reader's mind at the ſame time both belief and aſtoniſhment, and this is here performed by Ulyſſes. Dacier ſur l' Ariſtote.

v. 238. *As ſnows collected*, etc.] It is not eaſy to take the point of this ſimile. Monſ. Perault grievouſly miſtakes it: 'The deſcription (ſays he) which Homer gives us of 'the ſorrow of Penelope is very unaccountable; her body 'melted like ſnow upon an high mountain, when the eaſt-

The fleecy pile obeys the whiſp'ring gales,
Ends in a ſtream, and murmurs thro' the vales:
So, melted with the pleaſing tale he told,
Down her fair cheek the copious torrent roll'd:
She to her preſent lord laments him loſt,
And views that object which ſhe wants the moſt!

'wind *melts* it, and the ſnow thus *melted* fills the rivers; 'thus it was that the fair cheeks of Penelope *melted*. 'Thus, ſays Perault, is tranſlated word for word.' But in reality it reſembles Homer in nothing but the repetition of the word *melted*, or τήκεσθο, which in modern languages is burdenſome to the ear, but not in the Greek; for the word differs from itſelf according to its different formation, almoſt as much as a new one, and gives a very diſtant ſound; for inſtance, τήκεσθο, τηκομένης, κατέτηξεν: Whereas there is almoſt an identity of ſound in *melt melted*, or *melting*; or in the French, *liquifie, liquifiee, liquificient*. Neither has Perault entered into the ſenſe of the compariſon: τήκεσθο χρὼς is only a figurative hyperbole, as when we ſay a perſon is *conſumed* or *waſted* with grief; or perhaps τήκω ſignifies no more than *humecto*, as ταχεῖος *humidus*. In reality it is the quantity of tears that is intended to be repreſented, and the ſimile is thus to be underſtood: the ſnows, heaped upon the mountains by the cold weſt wind, are the ſorrows accumulated in the ſoul of Penelope; the warm eaſtern wind, which diſſolves theſe ſnows, is the recital of Ulyſſes, which melts thoſe ſorrows into tears and makes them flow When Agamemnon weeps, in the ninth of the Iliad, his tears are compared to a fountain of water falling from a rock; but women being more profuſe of tears, thoſe of Penelope are here compared to a river.

v. 244. *She to her preſent lord laments him loſt.*] Dacier obſerves that this is added by Homer not for our information, for we already know it; but becauſe it is a reflection which muſt neceſſarily occur to every reader:

With'ring at heart to ſee the weeping fair,
His eyes look ſtern, and caſt a gloomy ſtare;

it is a thing extraordinary to lament a perſon preſent, as if he were abſolutely loſt; and we reap a double ſatisfaction from the relation, by obſerving the behaviour of Penelope towards Ulyſſes, and of Ulyſſes towards Penelope; while he is at the ſame time in one ſenſe both abſent and preſent.

v. 247. *His eyes look ſtern, and caſt a gloomy ſtare.*] There is a beautiful contraſt between Ulyſſes and Penelope; Penelope indulges her paſſion for Ulyſſes, Ulyſſes reſtrains his for Penelope: the picture of Ulyſſes is drawn to the life; he is aſſaulted at once with ſeveral paſſions, aſtoniſhment and admiration on the one ſide, and compaſſion and a deſire to comfort Penelope on the other; theſe paſſions being in an equal balance, and exerting an equal force, he remains fixed, like a wave driven by contrary winds, and yelds to neither of their impulſes; it is thus Ulyſſes continues in a ſteady admiration, as if he had loſt all thought. This paſſage is too beautiful not to have been explained by the ancients: Plutarch quotes it as an inſtance of the command a wiſe man ought to have over his paſſions. 'Ulyſſes who was the moſt eloquent yet was the moſt ſilent of men, all his faculties were obedient, and ſubject to reaſon, he commanded his eyes not to weep, his tongue not to ſpeak, and his very heart not to pant or tremble: his reaſon influenced even his inward motions, and ſubdued the very blood and vital ſpirit.' And in his treatiſe of Moral Virtues, he again quotes theſe verſes: 'Ulyſſes had compleatly ſubjected all his faculties to right reaſon, and he held even his ſpirits, his blood, and his tears under the government of his judgment.' Virgil paints Dido in the infernal ſhades almoſt in the ſame colours with Ulyſſes.

Illa ſolo fixos oculos averſa tenebat,
Nec magis incepto vultum ſermone movetur
Quam ſi dura ſilex, aut ſtet Marpeſia cautes.

Of horn the ſtiff relentleſs balls appear,
Or globes of iron fix'd in either ſphère ;
Firm wiſdom interdicts the ſoft'ning tear.
A ſpeechleſs interval of grief enſues,
'Till thus the queen the tender theme renews.

Stranger! that e'er thy hoſpitable roof
Ulyſſes grac'd, confirm by faithful proof!
Delineate to my view my warlike lord,
His form, his habit, and his train record.

'Tis hard, he cries, to bring to ſudden ſight
Ideas that have wing'd their diſtant flight :
Rare on the mind thoſe images are trac'd,
Whoſe footſteps twenty winters have defac'd :
But what I can, receive——In ample mode,
A robe of military purple flow'd

v. 248. *Of horn the ſtiff relentleſs balls appear.*] Euſtathius informs us, that Homer applied this image of horny, or κερατοειδες, to the eye, becauſe one of the coats of it is ſaid to be of an *horny* ſubſtance ; but this is merely fanciful : if another tunic of the eye had been *ſteely*, there might have been ſome ground for the alluſion ; for Homer joins both of them in the illuſtration, and only meant to repreſent the ſtedfaſtneſs of the eye of Ulyſſes, in this affecting interview.

v. 262. etc. *A robe of military purple*, etc.] This is a remarkable paſſage, and gives us an exact deſcription of the habit of a king in the days of Homer, or perhaps ſtill earlier in the days of Ulyſſes. Purple ſeems antiently to have been appropriated to kings, and to them on whom they beſtowed it ; thus Judges viii. 26. the ſacred hiſtorian mentions purple rayment that was on the kings of Midian. Thus Eſther viii. 15. a garment of fine linen and purple is given to a favourite by king Ahaſuerus ; and r

O'er all his frame: illuſtrious on his breaſt,
The double-claſping gold the king confeſt.
In the rich woof a hound Moſaic drawn
Bore on full ſtretch, and ſeiz'd a dappled fawn:
Deep in the neck his fangs indent their hold;
They pant, and ſtruggle in the moving gold.
Fine as a filmy web beneath it ſhone
A veſt, that dazzled like a cloudleſs ſun:
The female train who round him throng'd to gaze,
In ſilent wonder ſigh'd unwilling praiſe.
A ſabre, when the warrior preſs'd to part,
I gave, enamell'd with Vulcanian art:

Maccabees xliii. the Jews made a decree, that Simon ſhould wear purple and gold, and that none of the people ſhould wear purple or a buckle of gold without his permiſſion, in token that he was the chief magiſtrate of the Jews; thus alſo Mac. x. 89. Alexander ſent Jonathan a buckle of gold, as the uſe is to be given to ſuch as are of the king's blood. Ulyſſes is here dreſt much after the ſame manner, he wears purple, and a buckle or claſp of gold, as a ſign of his regality. But what I would chiefly obſerve is, that the art of embroidery was known in theſe early ages, nay perhaps was in greater perfection than at this day; the embroidery was of divers colours, as we may gather from the epithet applied to the fawn, ποικίλον. Some perſons indeed tell us, that this was inwoven into the cloth, and was made in the loom; but the words of Homer will admit of the other interpretation and it is evident that embroidery was known amongſt the orientals in the age of Ulyſſes, from Judges v. 20. *Have they not ſped? have they not divided the prey, to Siſera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needle-work on both ſides, meet for the necks*

A mantle purple-ting'd, and radiant veſt,
Dimenſion'd equal to his ſize, expreſt
Affection grateful to my honour'd gueſt.
A fav'rite herald in his train I knew,
His viſage ſolemn ſad, of ſable hue:
Short woolly curls o'erfleec'd his bending head,
O'er which a promontory ſhoulder ſpread:
Eurybates! in whoſe large ſoul alone
Ulyſſes view'd an image of his own.
His ſpeech the tempeſt of her grief reſtor'd;
In all he told ſhe recognis'd her lord:

of them that take the ſpoil? Here is evidently mention made of embroidery, and perhaps ſuch was this robe of Ulyſſes; but however this be, it is manifeſt that all manner of creatures were figured upon the habit of great perſonages, and that thoſe creatures were inwrought ſo naturally as to ſeem to be alive.

v. 275. ———*radiant veſt,*
Dimenſion'd equal to his ſize———]

It may be aſked, what is the meaning of the τερμιόεντα χλαῖνα here mentioned by Ulyſſes? Euſtathius explains it by σύμμετρος, that is, neither too long nor too ſhort, too wide or too ſcanty, but exactly correſponding to the make of the body. Heſiod uſes the ſame word in the ſame ſenſe: and Heſychius interprets it in the ſame manner, Εὐμήκη, καὶ μέχρι τῶν ποδῶν τερμαλιζόμενον Dacier.

v. 278. *A fav'rite herald*———] This is very artful in Ulyſſes: Penelope had aſked what kind of perſon her huſband was: Ulyſſes fears to give a deſcription of himſelf, leſt by drawing the copy like the original now before the eyes of Penelope, ſhe ſhould diſcover him to be Ulyſſes: he therefore diverts the enquiry, yet at the ſame time ſatisfies her curioſity, by adding a new circumſtance to confirm his veracity, by deſcribing his attendant and herald Eurybates. Dacier.

But when the ſtorm was ſpent in plenteous ſhow'rs,
A pauſe inſpiriting her languiſh'd pow'rs,
O thou, ſhe cry'd, whom firſt inclement fate
Made welcome to my hoſpitable gate;
With all thy wants the name of poor ſhall end;
Henceforth live honour'd, my domeſtic friend!
The veſt much envy'd on your native coaſt,
And regal robe with figur'd gold emboſt,
In happier hours my artful hand employ'd,
When my lov'd lord this bliſful bow'r enjoy'd:
The fall of Troy erroneous and forlorn
Doom'd to ſurvive, and never to return!
Then he, with pity touch'd: O royal dame!
Your ever-anxious mind, and beauteous frame,
From the devouring rage of grief reclaim.
I not the fondneſs of your ſoul reprove
For ſuch a lord! who crown'd your virgin-love
With the dear bleſſing of a fair increaſe;
Himſelf adorn'd with more than mortal grace:
Yet while I ſpeak, the mighty woe ſuſpend;
Truth forms my tale; to pleaſing truth attend.
The royal object of your deareſt care,
Breathes in no diſtant clime the vital air:
In rich Theſprotia, and the nearer bound
Of Theſſaly, his name I heard renown'd:
Without retinue, to that friendly ſhore
Welcom'd with gifts of price, a ſumleſs ſtore!
His ſacrilegious train, who dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the God of day,

Were doom'd by Jove, and Phœbus' juſt decree,
To periſh in the rough Trinacrian ſea.
To better fate the blameleſs chief ordain'd,
A floating fragment of the wreck regain'd,
And rode the ſtorm; 'till by the billows toſt,
He landed on the fair Phæacian coaſt.
That race, who emulate the life of gods,
Receive him joyous to their bleſt abodes:
Large gifts confer, a ready ſail command,
To ſpeed his voyage to the Grecian ſtrand.
But your wiſe lord, (in whoſe capacious ſoul
High ſchemes of pow'r in juſt ſucceſſion roul.)
His Ithaca refus'd from fav'ring fate,
'Till copious wealth might guard his regal ſtate.
Phedon the fact affirm'd whoſe ſovereign ſway
Theſprotian tribes, a duteous race, obey:
And bade the gods this added truth atteſt,
(While pure libations crown'd the genial feaſt)

v. 327. *His Ithaca refus'd from fav'ring fate,*
'Till copious wealth might guard his regal ſtate.]
Ulyſſes amaſſed great riches by being driven from country to country: every prince where he arrived made him great preſents, according to the laudable cuſtoms of hoſpitality in former ages. The word in the Greek (obſerves Dacier) is ἀγυρτάζειν; it is borrowed from beggars, who by ſtrolling from place to place get their livelihood; and hence it was made uſe of ſimply to amaſs, or make collections. Heſychius explains it by συλλέγει, πολιζει, ἐγείρει; in which words there are two errors and it is manifeſt they are corrupted: Monſieur le Fevre reads πλωχιζει, ἀγείρει; Dacier.

That anchor'd in his port the veſſels ſtand,
To waſt the hero to his natal land.
for Dulichium urge the wat'ry way,
But firſt the Ulyſſean wealth ſurvey:
So rich the value of a ſtore ſo vaſt
Demands the pomp of centuries to waſte!
The darling object of your royal love,
Was journey'd thence to Dodonean Jove;
By the ſure precept of the ſylvan ſhrine,
To form the conduct of his great deſign:
Irreſolute of ſoul, his ſtate to ſhrowd
In dark diſguiſe, or come, a king avow'd?
Thus lives your lord; nor longer doom'd to roam:
Soon will he grace this dear paternal dome.
By Jove, the ſource of good, ſupreme in pow'r!
By the bleſt genius of this friendly bow'r!
I ratify my ſpeech; before the ſun
His annual longitude of heav'n ſhall run;

We may obſerve that Ulyſſes gives himſelf great commendations through this whole interview; he calls himſelf διος Ὀδυσσεὺς, and ſays, that there were few men in the world like him; that he was θεοῖς ἐναλίγκιος, or like the gods: this is not a ſign of vanity or oſtentation, ſince Ulyſſes ſpeaks in the character of a ſtranger: he muſt therefore ſpeak in the ſame manner as a ſtranger would have ſpoke; that is, with honour of Ulyſſes, to ingratiate himſelf with Penelope. Beſides, this conduct conduces to perſuade Penelope, that he is the perſon he pretends to be, and by the conſequence contributes to prevent a diſcovery.

When the pale empreſs of yon' ſtarry train
In the next month renews her faded wane,
Ulyſſes will aſſert his rightful reign.

What thanks! what boon! reply'd the queen, are due,
When time ſhall prove the ſtoried bleſſing true:
My lord's return ſhould fate no more retard,
Envy ſhall ſicken at thy vaſt reward.
But my prophetic fears, alas! preſage,
The wounds of Deſtiny's relentleſs rage
I long muſt weep! nor will Ulyſſes come,
With royal gifts to ſend you honour'd home!——
Your other taſk, ye menial train, forbear:
Now waſh the ſtranger, and the bed prepare;
With ſplendid palls the downy fleece adorn:
Up-riſing early with the purple morn,

v. 363. *Now waſh the ſtranger*, etc.] This was one of the firſt rites of hoſpitality obſerved towards ſtrangers, amongſt the ancients. The ſcriptures abound with inſtances of it: Abraham offers water to waſh the feet of the angels whom he miſtook for ſtrangers, *etc.* There was alſo a bath for the ſtranger, but this ſeems to have been a greater honour (as Dacier obſerves) than that of waſhing the feet; this may be gathered from the manner in which it was performed; the daughters of the family, even young princeſſes, aſſiſted at the bath; but the waſhing the feet was an office committed to ſervants: thus the daughter of Neſtor in the third Odyſſey bathed Telemachus, but Ulyſſes being diſguiſed like a beggar, Euryclea waſhes his feet. This agrees exactly with another paſſage of ſcripture; when David ſent to aſk Abigail to wife, 1 Sam. xxv. 41. ſhe made anſwer, *Let thine handmaid be a ſervant to waſh the feet of the ſervants of my lord.* My memory fails me, if there be any other paſſage, either

His ſinews ſhrunk with age, and ſtiff with toil,
In the warm bath foment with fragrant oil.
Then with Telemachus the ſocial feaſt
Partaking free, my ſole invited gueſt;
Whoe'er neglects to pay diſtinction due,
The breach of hoſpitable right may rue.
The vulgar of my ſex I muſt exceed
In real fame, when moſt humane my deed:
And vainly to the praiſe of queen aſpire,
If, ſtranger! I permit that mean attire,
Beneath the feaſtful bow'r. A narrow ſpace
Confines the circle of our deſtin'd race;
'Tis ours, with good the ſcanty round to grace.

in the Iliad or Odyſſey, where this practice of waſhing the feet is directly mentioned; the reaſon is, this was an office performed only to inferior perſons; the bath was for heroes and kings. Now both Homer's poems are filled with the characters of ſuch perſonages, and therefore there was no room to mention it in other places: it is true the word here is ἀπονίψατε, and does not neceſſarily imply the waſhing of the feet, but waſhing in general: yet here it is to be underſtood of the feet, for Euryclea in the act of waſhing them diſcovers this ſtranger to be Ulyſſes.

v. 376. ——*A narrow ſpace*
Confines the circle of our deſtin'd race.] The ſenſe is here cut ſhort, and Homer, like a good painter, leaves ſomething to be ſupplied by the reader's imagination. Life is ſhort, (ſays Penelope) we ought therefore to employ it in doing good. The motive indeed which ſhe uſes, is not entirely conformable to true theology; ſhe here propoſes glory as the ſole aim of doing virtuous actions; though in other places Homer plainly aſſerts, that we ought to act with piety to pleaſe the gods. Dacier.

Thoſe who to cruel wrong their ſtate abuſe,
Dreaded in life, the mutter'd curſe purſues;
By death diſ-rob'd of all their ſavage pow'rs,
Then, licens'd rage her hateful prey devours.
But he whoſe in-born worth his acts commend,
Of gentle ſoul, to human race a friend;
The wretched he relieves diffuſe his fame,
And diſtant tongues extol the patron-name.

Princeſs, he cry'd, in vain your bounties flow
On me, confirm'd, and obſtinate in woe,
When my lov'd Crete receiv'd my final view,
And from my weeping eyes her cliffs withdrew;
Theſe tatter'd weeds (my decent robe reſign'd)
I choſe, the livery of a woful mind!
Nor will my heart-corroding cares abate
With ſplendid palls, and canopies of ſtate:
Low-couch'd on earth, the gift of ſleep I ſcorn,
And catch the glances of the waking morn.
The delicacy of your courtly train
To waſh a wretched wand'rer wou'd diſdain;
But if, in tract of long experience try'd,
And ſad ſimilitude of woes ally'd,

v. 399. *But if, in tract of long experience*, etc.] I will have an old woman to waſh me (ſays Ulyſſes.) The reaſon of this requeſt is not evident at firſt view; but Euſtathius explains it by ſhewing that Ulyſſes acts thus to avoid the inſults and contempt of the younger damſels of Penelope, who had ſufficiently outraged him in this and the preceeding book; they would think themſelves degraded by performing ſuch an office to a beggar. Euſtathius remarks, that ſome antient critics rejected three verſes here:

Some wretch reluctant views aerial light,
To her mean hand assign the friendly rite.

Pleas'd with his wise reply, the queen rejoin'd:
Such gentle manners, and so sage a mind,

It is absurd, say they, that Ulysses should chuse Euryclea for this office, who was the only person who could discover him, and ruin his designs; he knew she was acquainted with the wound that afterwards discovers him: but the truth is, Ulysses knew Euryclea to be a person of wisdom, and he was in hopes to draw her over to his interest, and make use of her in his affairs in the future parts of the Odyssey; and this he does upon many important occasions, in particular in locking up the palace at the time of the battle between him and the suitors; so that by her means he prevents the report of that great incident from being carried to their partizans abroad: here therefore he artfully brings it about, that Euryclea should be assigned to this office, not only to avoid the insults of the other females, but to make use of her faithfulness and wisdom to carry on his designs, and make the way more easy to the suitors destruction. The choice therefore was prudent; she was aged, and acquainted with human miseries, not only by reason of her age, but had herself suffered in all the afflictions of Penelope and Telemachus: we find she is described as a mother to the whole family, and she all along adopts the afflictions of it: Eustathius therefore may perhaps be mistaken when he asserts this to be an instance of ill counsels crowned with good success. But then it may be asked, if Euryclea was a person of such wisdom and fidelity, why does not Ulysses trust her with the secret of his return? the reason is plain, it would not only have been contrary to his cautious nature, but a breach of all decency to trust himself to Euryclea, and not to Penelope; this would in some measure have raised the character of the servant, above that of his wife and queen. Part of this note I am indebted for to M. Dacier.

In all who grac'd this hoſpitable bow'r
I ne'er diſcern'd, before this ſocial hour.
Such ſervants as your humble choice requires,
To light receiv'd the lord of my deſires,
New from the birth: and with a mother's hand
His tender bloom to manly growth ſuſtain'd:
Of matchleſs prudence, and a duteous mind;
Though now to life's extremeſt verge declin'd,
Of ſtrength ſuperior to the toil aſſign'd.——
Riſe, Euryclea! with officious care
For the poor friend the cleanſing bath prepare:
This debt his correſpondent fortunes claim,
Too like Ulyſſes, and perhaps the ſame!
Thus old with woes my fancy paints him now!
For age untimely marks the careful brow.
Inſtant obſequious to the mild command,
Sad Euryclea roſe: with trembling hand
She veils the torrent of her tearful eyes;
And thus impaſſion'd to herſelf replies.

v. 423. *She veils the torrent of her tearful eyes.*] Dacier obſerves that Ariſtotle in his third book of Rhetoric quotes this action of Euryclea as an inſtance of a paralogiſm familiar to Homer; and again in his Poetics, he cites it to the ſame purpoſe: a paralogiſm conſiſts in making uſe of falſe reaſoning, and drawing a falſe conſequence from true premiſſes: "All men, ſays Ariſtotle are naturally perſuaded that where ſuch a thing is, or is done, "ſuch another muſt happen; we may therefore make "them eaſily believe that if the laſt is, the firſt muſt con"ſequently be; but in reality, the latter which we lay "down as truth being often falſe, the former is ſo more "frequently; for it does not follow, that becauſe one

Son of my love, and monarch of my cares!
What pangs for thee this wretched bosom bears!
Are thus by Jove who constant beg his aid
With pious deed, and pure devotion, paid?
He never dar'd defraud the sacred fane,
Of perfect hecatombs in order slain:
There oft implor'd his tutelary pow'r,
Long to protract the sad sepulchral hour;

" thing is, another must necessarily be; but because we " are persuaded of the truth of the latter, we conclude " falsly, that the former is also true." The reader will enter into the meaning of Aristotle, and understand what a paralogism is, by an example of it: for instance, if we were to prove a man to be in love, we bring it as an argument that he is pale: now this is a false reasoning or paralogism, because a person may be pale from other reasons than love. Thus in the instance of Euryclea, ' Homer (says Aristotle) imposes upon his reader, by mentioning a sign that is known, to draw a consequence from ' it, to prove a thing that is not known;' that is, Homer endeavours to prove that the whole story concerning Euryclea is true, and that she really hid her eyes when she wept, because this is a consequente of passion, and because it is natural for persons to conceal their eyes with their hands while they weep. This also is a paralogism, for every syllable concerning Euryclea may be a fiction of the poet, though such a gesture is natural to a person in her circumstances; the imposition consists in this, namely, in the art of the poet in endeavouring to deceive us into a a belief, that because persons when they weep conceal their eyes, therefore it is true that Euryclea thus actually wept; the latter may be evidently false, though the former be true: Aristotle brings this practice of Homer as an example to all poets how to tell lies as they ought, or agreeably.

That form'd for empire with paternal care,
His realm might recognize an equal heir.
O destin'd head! The pious vows are lost;
His God forgets him on a foreign coast!——
Perhaps, like thee, poor guest! in wanton pride
The rich insult him, and the young deride!
Conscious of worth revil'd, thy gen'rous mind
The friendly rite of purity declin'd;
My will concurring with my queen's command,
Accept the bath from this obsequious hand.

V. 434. ——*The pious vows are lost;*
His God forgets him——]

Euryclea we see is astonished to find that a person who is remarkable for his piety should be unfortunate; the age was not enlightened enough to know that calamity is often a proof of virtue, and a trial, not a punishment. Maximus Tyrius, the Platonic, 22. *differt.* excellently explains this subject: 'Who (says that author) can deny 'Ulysses to be a man of piety? Jupiter remembers him, 'Minerva loves him, Mercury guides him, Calypso is en-'amoured with him, and Leucothea saves his life! Who 'then can deny but that heaven tried him with all his 'afflictions, that he might appear to be, and deserve to 'be, called a good man? this is the reason why he suf-'fered at Troy, from the suitors, by the Cyclops, by 'Circe, and by shipwreck: this is the reason why he wan-'dered as a vagabond and a beggar; that he was half 'naked, that he was struck and insulted, and suffered a 'thousand insolencies from the riots of the suitors: it was 'the favour and love of heaven that brought him into all 'these afflictions, and not the anger of Neptune.' When a good man suffers, heaven frequently chuses him out as an hero, who knows how to behave bravely in the day of adversity, and this is agreeable to true theology.

A ſtrong emotion ſhakes my anguiſh'd breaſt;
In thy whole form Ulyſſes ſeems expreſt:
Of all the wretched harbour'd on our coaſt,
None imag'd e'er like thee my maſter loſt.
Thus half diſcover'd thro' the dark diſguiſe,
With cool compoſure feign'd, the chief replies:
You join your ſufferage to the public vote;
The ſame you think, have all beholders thought.
He ſaid: repleniſh'd from the pureſt ſprings,
The laver ſtrait with buſy care ſhe brings:
In the deep vaſe, that ſhone like burniſh'd gold,
The boiling fluid temperates the cold.
Mean-time revolving in his thoughtful mind
The ſcar, with which his manly knee was ſign'd;
His face averting from the crackling blaze,
His ſhoulders intercept th' unfriendly rays.

v. 443 *In thy whole form Ulyſſes ſeems expreſt*, etc.] Homer continually draws his reflections from the preſent object: Penelope, at the ſight of this diſtreſſed and ill-clothed ſtranger, breaks out into a tender ſentiment, and cries, "Perhaps my Ulyſſes is ſuch as he!" for thus Euſtathius applies the expreſſion, ὁ τοιοῦτος ἦν φύσει ἀλλὰ διὰ κάκωσιν; that is, "he was not ſuch by nature, but mis-"fortune:" But if we underſtand it of a bodily reſemblance, the ſentiment is ſtill beautiful, and the reader cannot without pleaſure ſee Penelope deceived in comparing Ulyſſes with Ulyſſes. Dacier.

v. 447. ——*the chief replies.*] This is very artful in Ulyſſes: if he had denied the reſemblance, it might have given ſuſpicion; he therefore confeſſes it, and by confeſſing it perſuades Euryclea that he is not the real Ulyſſes. Dacier

v. 457. *His face averting from the crackling blaze.*]

Thus cautious, in th'obſcure he hop'd to fly
The curious ſearch of Euryclea's eye.
Cautious in vain! nor ceas'd the dame to find
The ſcar, with which his manly knee was ſign'd.

The reaſon why Ulyſſes turns toward the darkneſs is to avoid diſcovery, and that Euryclea might not examine him too curiouſly: but this is not the whole deſign of Homer; the poet thus deſcribes Ulyſſes to give probability to the future ſtory; for as Euſtathius judiciouſly remarks, it is from this action alone that the fainting of Euryclea, her laying her hand on the chin of Ulyſſes, his ſeiſure of her throat to hinder her from diſcovering him, eſcape the notice of Penelope; Ulyſſes is ſeated out of view, and withdrawn from obſervation. Dacier.

v. 461. *Cautious in vain! nor ceas'd the dame to find*
The ſcar———]

This ſtory, concerning the wound of Ulyſſes, may, I fear in ſome parts of it ſeem ſomewhat tedious; it may therefore be neceſſary to ſhew that it is introduced with judgment; and though not entirely entertaining, yet artful.

Ariſtotle in the eighth *chap.* of his Poetics, ſpeaking of the unity of the action of the Odyſſey, mentions this wound of Ulyſſes. Homer, ſays he, who excelled other poets in all reſpects, ſeems perfectly to have known this defect, (*viz.* that all the actions of an hero do not conſtitute the unity of the action, but only ſuch as are capable to be united with the fable;) for in compoſing his Odyſſey, he has not mentioned all the adventures of Ulyſſes: for example, he has not joined the wound he received upon Parnaſſus with the account of his feigned madneſs, when the Greeks aſſembled their army; for becauſe one of them happened, it was neither neceſſary nor probable that the other ſhould alſo happen; but he has inſerted all that could have reſpect to one and the ſame action. Monſieur Dacier fully explains Ariſtotle; we have in this precept (obſerves that author) two re-

This on Parnaſſus combating the boar,
With glancing rage the tuſky ſavage tore.
Attended by his brave maternal race,
His grandſire ſent him to the ſylvan chace,

markable events in the life of Ulyſſes; his feigned madneſs, and his wound received upon Parnaſſus: the poet mentions the wound, but is ſilent about his madneſs: he ſaw that the latter had no connexion either in truth or probability with the ſubject of his poem, and therefore he ſays not a word of it: he has acted otherwiſe with reſpect to the wound received upon Parnaſſus; for although that wound was no more to the matter of his poem, than the madneſs, yet he ſpeaks of it, becauſe he found an opportunity of inſerting it ſo naturally into his principal action, that it becomes a neceſſary part of it, ſince it cauſes a remembrance of his hero, that is ſince it is the occaſion of Eurycleа's diſcovering Ulyſſes; ſo that this hiſtory which is here related at length is no foreign epiſode, but a natural part of the ſubject, by being thus artfully united to it. This fully teaches us of what nature the different parts which a poet uſes to form one and the ſame action ought to be; namely, either neceſſary or probable conſequences of one another, as the remembrance of Ulyſſes was of this wound: every adventure then that has not this connexion ought to be rejected as foreign, and as breaking the unity of the action: and therefore Homer took care not to interrupt the unity of his Odyſſey, by the epiſode of the feigned madneſs of Ulyſſes: for that incident could not be produced by any that were neceſſary or proper to the poem, nor produe any that had the leaſt relation to it.

Boſſu fully agrees with Ariſtotle and Dacier, and gathers from this epiſode that ſome incidents which make not directly any part of the action or the fable may be inſerted into a poem, if thoſe incidents are neceſſary to clear up any part of the fable or action.

This *remembrance*, or diſcovery by the wound, is

Autolycus the bold: (a mighty name
For ſpotleſs faith, and deeds of martial fame:

mentioned in another place; ſee the twenty-firſt Odyſſey. Ariſtotle in his ſeventeenth *chap.* of the Poetics prefers this remembrance to that there made to Eumæus; it is (obſerves that author) here managed with more addreſs and art; it is done without deſign, and ſeems a conſequence of the ſtory: there Ulyſſes himſelf diſcovers the wound; here it ariſes from the ſubject, and a ſeries of incidents: there Ulyſſes has recourſe to it, and it cauſes no ſurprize, becauſe there is no great art in ſhewing a mark, which we are willing to have known. All remembrances therefore (ſays Ariſtotle) which produce their effects by deſign have little ingenuity: whereas thoſe which are brought about by chance, ſurprize us, and are inſtances of the poet's art and addreſs.

v. 467. *Autolycus the bold: (a mighty name*
For ſpotleſs faith——————]

This diffi[illegible]t paſſage is well explained by Dacier and Euſtathius: the words are

——— ὃς ἀνθρώπους ἐκέκαστο
Κλεπτοσύνῃ θ' ὅρκῳ τε———

which literally run thus, "he ſurpaſſed all men in ſwear-"ing and ſtealing:" a terrible character! if it were to be underſtood according to the letter: it has been imagined, that Homer commends Autolycus for his addreſs in robbery, and making equivocal oaths; like the perſon (ſays Euſtathius) who made a truce with his enemies for ſeveral days, and immediately went and ravaged their territories by night, and defended it, by telling them that the truce was not made for the night but the day: or like the perſon mentioned by Athenæus, who ſtole a fiſh, and gave it to his neighbour, and being queſtioned about it ſwore, that he had it not himſelf, nor ſaw any other perſon ſteal it: but this is not the meaning of Homer, for

Hermes his patron-god thoſe gifts beſtow'd,
Whoſe ſhrine with weanling lambs he went to load.) 470

he calls Autolycus ἔσθλος or a *good man*, and adds that this κλεπτοσύνη καὶ ἔρκος, was the gift of a god. The truth is, the former word does not here ſignify theft, nor the latter perjury: the former ſignifies a laudable addreſs in concealing our own deſigns, and diſcovering thoſe of our enemies; it conſiſts in ſurpriſing them, when they leaſt expect us, in beating up their quarters, carrying off their convoys, their proviſions, and in ſhort in all manner of ſtratagems, authorized by the laws of war: ὅρκος ſignifies fidelity in obſerving an oath, and never violating the ſanctity of it. Plato in his firſt book de repub. makes it plain, that this is the ſenſe of Homer: he therefore quotes this paſſage, and aſſerts that he is the beſt guardian of an army who knows how to ſteal the counſels and enterpriſes of the enemy, τὰ τῶν πολεμίων κλέψαι βεβεύμαλα, καὶ τὰς ἀλλας πρᾶξεις; from this, it is there inferred, that juſtice is a kind of chicanery (κλεπτική τις ἐπ' ὠφελείᾳ φίλων, καὶ βλάβῃ τῶν ἐχθρῶν) by which we ſerve our friends, and bring detriment to our enemies; but the anſwer there given to this aſſertion is, ἐ μὰ τὸν Δια, or, by no means: it muſt be underſtood with ſome reſtriction: it is lawful to deceive an enemy in war, but in common life criminal. The qualities therefore that Homer commends in Autolycus, are his dexterity in diſcovering, penetrating and preventing the deſigns of his enemies, and the religious obſervance of his oaths, and not theft and perjury: Euſtathius explains Homer by adding κλεπτοσύνην ἐ κακὴν, ὅρκον ἐ φαῦλον.

v. 469. *Hermes his patron-god thoſe gifts beſtow'd.*] The reaſon why Homer attributes theſe gifts to Mercury is becauſe he was the preſident of ſecrecy, or of all things that are acted with a deſire of concealment. He is alſo the god of ſpeech, it therefore appertained to that deity to guard the verity of it, in particular of oaths, being the preſident of ſpeaking Dacier.

His course to Ithaca this hero sped,
When the first product of Laertes' bed
Was new disclos'd to birth: the banquet ends,
When Euryclea from the queen descends,
And to his fond embrace the babe commends.
" Receive, she cries, your royal daughter's son;
" And name the blessing that your pray'rs have won.
Then thus the hoary chief. " My victor arms
" Have aw'd the realms around with dire alarms:

v. 476. " *Receive, she cries, your royal daughter's son*, etc.] We have here an antient custom observed by the Greeks: the child was placed by the father upon the grandfather's knees, as a token that a grandchild was the most agreeable present that a son could make to a father. That this was an antient custom is evident from the Iliad.

————συγερὸς δ' ἐπεκέκλετ' Ἐρινῦς
Μήποτε γούνασιν οἷσιν ἑφέσσεσθαι φίλον υἱὸν
Ἐξ ἐμεῖθεν γεγαῶτα————

That is, the father of Phœnix imprecated the Furies, that Phœnix might never have a son to place upon his grandfather's knees.

It has been already remarked that it was customary in Greece for the parents to name the child; here the grandfather names Ulysses: but this is done by permission of the parents; for Autolycus bids them give the name.

Γαμβρὸς ἐμὸς δυγάτης τε τίθεσθ' ὄνομ'.————

Ulysses was called Ὀδυσσεὺς, from Ὀδύσσω, Iracor; implying (says Eustathius) that many hated, or were enraged at, Autolycus, for the mischiefs he had done by his art in war, ἐκ τῆς μίσης διὰ κλεπτοσύνην; that is in other words, Autolycus called Ulysses Ὀδυσσευς from the terror he had been to his enemies.

" A ſure memorial of my dreaded fame
" The boy ſhall bear, Ulyſſes be his name!
" And when with filial love the youth ſhall come
" To view his mother's ſoil, my Delphic dome
" With gifts of price ſhall ſend him joyous home.
Lur'd with the promis'd boon, when youthful prime
Ended in man, his mother's natal clime
Ulyſſes fought; with fond affection dear
Amphithea's arms receiv'd the royal heir:
Her antient * lord an equal joy poſſeſt;
Inſtant he bade prepare the genial feaſt:
A ſteer to form the ſumptuous banquet bled;
Whoſe ſtately growth five flow'ry ſummers fed:
His ſons divide, and roaſt with artful care
The limbs; then all the taſteful viands ſhare.
Nor ceas'd diſcourſe (the banquet of the ſoul)
'Till Phœbus wheeling to the weſtern goal
Reſign'd the ſkies, and night involv'd the pole.
Their drooping eyes the ſlumb'rous ſhade oppreſt,
Sated they roſe, and all retir'd to reſt.
Soon as the morn new-rob'd in purple light,
Pierc'd with her golden ſhafts the rear of night;
Ulyſſes, and his brave maternal race
The young Autolyci, aſſay the chace.
Parnaſſus, thick perplex'd with horrid ſhades,
With deep-mouth'd hounds the hunter-troop invades;
What time the ſun from Ocean's peaceful ſtream,
Darts o'er the lawn his horizontal beam.

* Autolycus.

The pack impatient ſnuff the tainted gale;
The thorny wilds the wood-men fierce aſſail:
And foremoſt of the train, his cornel ſpear
Ulyſſes wav'd, to rouze the ſavage war.
Deep in the rough receſſes of the wood,
A lofty copſe, the growth of ages, ſtood:
Nor winter's boreal blaſt, nor thund'rous ſhow'r,
Nor ſolar ray, could pierce the ſhady bow'r,
With wither'd foilage ſtrew'd, a heapy ſtore!
The warm pavilion of a dreadful boar.
Rous'd by the hounds and hunters' mingling cries,
The ſavage from his leafy founder flies:
With fiery glare his ſanguine eye balls ſhine,
And briſtles high impale his horrid chine.
Young Ithacus advanc'd, defies the foe,
Poiſing his lifted lance in act to throw:
The ſavage renders vain the wound decreed,
And ſprings impetuous with opponent ſpeed!
His tuſks oblique he aim'd the knee to goar;
Aſlope they glanc'd, the ſinewy fibres tore,
And bar'd the bone: Ulyſſes undiſmay'd,
Soon with redoubled force the wound repay'd;
To the right ſhoulder joint the ſpear apply'd,
His farther flank with ſtreaming purple dy'd:
On earth he ruſh'd with agonizing pain;
With joy, and vaſt ſurprize, th' applauding train
View'd his enormous bulk extended on the plain.
With bandage firm Ulyſſes knee they bound;
Then chaunting myſtic lays, the cloſing wound

v. 536. *Then chaunting myſtic lays, the cloſing wound*
Of ſacred melody confeſs'd the force.]

This is a remarkable inſtance of the antiquity of that idle ſuperſtition of curing wounds by incantation or charms: yet Homer is no way blameable for mentioning it; he wrote according to the opinion of the age, which whether true or falſe vindicates him as a poet. Indeed almoſt all other poets have ſpoken more boldly than Homer of the power of incantations; thus Virgil,

Carmina vel cœlo poſſunt deducere lunam,
Carminibus Circe ſocios mutavit Ulyſſei
Frigidus in pratis cantando rumpitur anguis.

But we may defend Homer from Pliny, who has thought this point, viz. whether charms are available phyſically, worthy of a ſerious diſcuſſion; he refers to this paſſage in his natural Hiſtory, lib. 28. cap. 1. *Dixit Homerus profluvium ſanguinis vulnerato femine Ulyſſem inhibuiſſe carmine, Theophraſtus, Iſciadicos ſanari, Cato prodidit Luxatis membris carmen auxiliari, Varro Podagris.* Attalus affirms, that if a man chance to ſpy a ſcorpion, and pronounce the word *duo*, it will lie ſtill, and never ſhoot his ſting. I think theſe grave authors outdo even the fictions of poets; and I hardly believe any of them would have ventured to provoke a ſerpent, truſting to the charm. But we are to underſtand this charm not merely as a form of words, but as joined with ſome muſical notes, and then it may appear more rational: for the cure of the ſciatica, Theophraſtus commends the Phrygian muſic, and A. Gellius for giving eaſe to it; but adds, *ut memoriæ produm eſt.* Apollonius in his book de Miris, affirms from Theophraſtus, that muſic cures many diſeaſes both of mind and body, καθάπερ λειποθυμίας, φόβους, καὶ τὰς ἐπὶ μακρόν, γιγνομένας τῆς διανοίας ἐκσάσεις, ἰᾶται δὲ καταύλησις ἰσχιάδα καὶ ἐπιληψίαν. And the ſame author affirms, that many in his time, eſpecially the Thebans, uſed the pipe for the cure of ſeveral ſickneſs, which Galen calls καταυ-

Of ſacred melody confeſs'd the force;
The tides of life regain'd their azure courſe.
Then back they led the youth with loud acclaim;
Autolycus, enamour'd with his fame,
Confirm'd the cure: and from the Delphic dome
With added gifts return'd him glorious home.
He ſafe at Ithaca with joy receiv'd,
Relates the chace, and early praiſe atchiev'd.
Deep o'er his knee inſeam'd, remain'd the ſcar:
Which noted token of the woodland war
When Euryclea found, the ablution ceas'd;
Down dropt the leg, from her ſlack hand releas'd;
The mingled fluids from the vaſe redound;
The vaſe reclining floats the floor around!
Smiles dew'd with tears the pleaſing ſtrife expreſt
Of grief, and joy, alternate in her breaſt.

λειν τῆ τότε, *ſuper loco affecto tibia canere*; or *loca dolentia decantare*. I will not affirm that ſuch charms of muſic have no power in ſome maladies; every one knows what an effect the harp of David had over the ſpirits of Saul; but we have either loſt, or not yet found out the art: a natural reaſon may be aſſigned for it: for as the muſical notes move the air, ſo the air moves the inward ſpirits, and the humours of the body, which are the ſeat of diſeaſes: ſo that by this new motion they may be condenſed, rarified, diſſipated or expelled, according as they are agitated or influenced by the concuſſion of the muſical notes; but however this be, if other poets may ſay that charms have power to ſtop rivers in their courſes, Homer is not be condemned for aſcribing the power of ſtopping blood to incantations. See Mr. Cowley's Notes on the firſt book of his Davideis.

Her flutt'ring words in melting murmurs dy'd;
At length abrupt—my ſon!—my king!—ſhe cry'd.
His neck with fond embrace infolding faſt,
Full on the queen her raptur'd eyes ſhe caſt,
Ardent to ſpeak the monarch ſafe reſtor'd:
But ſtudious to conceal her royal lord,
Minerva fix'd her mind on views remote,
And from the preſent bliſs abſtracts her thought.

v. 554. *—abrupt—my ſon!—my king!—ſhe cry'd.*] It may ſeem incredible that this dialogue between Ulyſſes and Euryclea could be held in the preſence of Penelope, and ſhe not hear it: how is this to be reconciled to probability? I will anſwer in the words of Euſtathius: the poet, ſays he, has admirably guarded againſt this objection; it is for this reaſon that he mentions the falling of Ulyſſes's leg into the water, the ſound of the veſſel from that accident, the overturning of it, and the effuſion of the water: all theſe different ſounds may eaſily be ſuppoſed to drown the voice of Euryclea, ſo as it might not be heard by Penelope; it is true, ſhe could not but obſerve this confuſion that happened while Euryclea waſhes; but the age of Euryclea might naturally make her believe that all this happened by accident thro' her feebleneſs, and Penelope might be perſuaded that it was thus occaſioned, having no reaſon to ſuſpect the truth: beſides, what is more frequent on the theatre than to ſpeak to the audience, while the perſons on the ſtage are ſuppoſed not to hear? in reality, it is evident that Ulyſſes and Euryclea were at a proper diſtance from Penelope, probably out of decency, while the feet were waſhing; for as ſoon as that office is over, Homer tells us that Ulyſſes drew nearer to the fire where Penelope ſate, that he might reſume the conference.

Αὐτὶς ἀρ' ἀσσοτέρω πυρὸς ἕλκετο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.

His hand to Euryclea's mouth apply'd,
Art thou foredoom'd my peſt? the hero cry'd:
Thy milky founts my infant lips have drain'd;
And have the fates thy babling age ordain'd
To violate the life thy youth ſuſtain'd?
An exile have I told, with weeping eyes,
Full twenty annual ſuns in diſtant ſkies:
At length return'd, ſome god inſpires thy breaſt
To know thy king, and here I ſtand confeſt.
This heav'n-diſcover'd truth to thee conſign'd,
Reſerve, the treaſure of thy inmoſt mind:
Elſe if the gods my vengeful arm ſuſtain,
And proſtrate to my ſword the ſuitor-train;
With their lewd mates, thy undiſtinguiſh'd age
Shall bleed a victim to vindictive rage.

Then thus rejoin'd the dame, devoid of fear:
What words, my ſon, have paſs'd thy lips ſevere?
Deep in my ſoul the truſt ſhall lodge ſecur'd,
With ribs of ſteel, and marble heart immur'd.

v. 578. *Deep in my ſoul the truſt ſhall lodge ſecur'd.*] Plutarch, in his treatiſe upon garrulity, obſerves, that Ulyſſes and every perſon that had relation to him were remarkable for their taciturnity: they had all profited under ſo great a maſter of ſecrecy as Ulyſſes: it is practiſed by his wife, his ſon, and his nurſe; his very companions, who attended him in his voyages, poſſeſſed this virtue in ſo eminent a degree as to ſuffer themſelves to be daſhed in pieces by the Cyclops, rather than diſcover him to that giant. The moral that we are to gather from this fable is, that the ſafety of princes' counſels conſiſts in ſecrecy. Dacier.

When heav'n, auſpicious to thy right avow'd,
Shall proſtrate to thy ſword the ſuitor-crowd;
The deeds I'll blazon of the menial fair;
The lewd to death devote, the virtuous ſpare.
Thy aid avails me not, the chief reply'd;
My own experience ſhall their doom decide;
A witneſs-judge precludes a long appeal:
Suffice it thee thy monarch to conceal.
He ſaid: obſequious with redoubled pace,
She to the fount conveys th' exhauſted vaſe:
The bath renew'd, ſhe ends the pleaſing toil
With plenteous unction of ambroſial oil.
Adjuſting to his limbs the tatter'd veſt,
His former ſeat receiv'd the ſtranger-gueſt;
Whom thus with penſive air the queen addreſt.
Tho' night, diſſolving grief in grateful eaſe,
Your drooping eyes with ſoft oppreſſion ſeize;
Awhile, reluctant to her pleaſing force,
Suſpend the reſtful hour with ſweet diſcourſe.
The day (ne'er brighten'd with a beam of joy!)
My menials, and domeſtic cares employ:

591. *With plenteous unction*———] We are not to imagine that the cuſtom of anointing the feet was an inſtance of luxury; it prevailed over the oriental world ſolely out of neceſſity, to avoid offenſiveneſs in thoſe hot regions. This cuſtom prevailed many ages after Homer, and we have an inſtance of it in the woman who waſhed the feet of our Lord and Saviour with tears, and anointed them with oil. This place is a plain proof that oil was uſed after waſhing the feet as well as after bathing.

And, unattended by ſincere repoſe,
The night aſſiſts my ever-wakeful woes:
When nature's huſh'd beneath her brooding ſhade,
My echoing griefs the ſtarry vault invade,
As when the months are clad in flow'ry green,
Sad Philomel, in bow'ry ſhades unſeen,
To vernal airs attunes her varied ſtrains;
And Itylus ſounds warbling o'er the plains:

v. 606. *Sad Philomel*, etc.] This paſſage is thus explained by Euſtathius. The ſimile is not only introduced to expreſs the ſorrow of Penelope, but the nature of it: it is not ſo much intended to illuſtrate her grief, as her various agitations and different thoughts compared to the different accents in the mournful ſong of the nightingale; for thus Homer applies it.

Ὡς καὶ ἐμοὶ δίχα θυμὸς ὀρώρεται ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.

Euſtathius adds, that Homer relates this ſtory very differently from later authors: he mentions nothing of Progne, Tereus, or Pandion, unleſs that name be the ſame with Pandareus; Itylus likewiſe is by them called Itys. The ſtory is thus, according to theſe writers: Philomela was the wife of Tereus king of Thrace; ſhe had a ſiſter named Progne, whom Tereus raviſhed and cut her tongue out, that ſhe might not diſcover the crime to Philomela; but Progne betrayed it by weaving the ſtory in a piece of embroidery; upon this Philomela ſlew her own ſon Itys or Itylus, and ſerved up his fleſh to the table of her huſband Tereus; which being made known to him, he purſues Philomela and Progne, who are feigned to be changed into birds for their ſwift flight into Athens, by which they eſcaped the revenge of Tereus. Philomela is fabled to be turned into a nightingale, and Progne into a ſwallow; it being obſerved by Pauſanias, that no ſwallow ever builds in Thrace, or nightingale is ever ſeen there, as hat-

Young Itylus, his parents darling joy!
Whom chance miſled the mother to deſtroy:
Now doom'd a wakeful bird to wail the beauteous boy
So in nocturnal ſolitude forlorn,
A ſad variety of woes I mourn!
My mind reflective, in a thorny maze
Devious, from care to care inceſſant ſtrays.
Now, wav'ring doubt ſucceeds to long deſpair;
Shall I my virgin nuptial vow revere;
And joining to my ſon's my menial train,
Partake his councils, and aſſiſt his reign?
Or, ſince mature in manhood, he deplores
His dome diſhonour'd, and exhauſted ſtores;
Shall I, reluctant! to his will accord;
And from the peers ſelect the nobleſt lord;

ing the country of Tereus. But Homer follows a different hiſtory: Pandareus [illegible] three daughters, Merope, Cleothera, and Aedon: Aedon was married his eldeſt daughter Aedon to Zethus brother of Amphion, mentioned in the eleventh Odyſſey; the [illegible] named Itylus; and being envious at the [illegible] of her brother-in-law Amphion, [illegible] maleus the eldeſt of her nephews [illegible] brought up with the children of Amphion, [illegible] ſame bed with this Amaleus. [illegible] lus to abſent himſelf one night from [illegible] gets her orders; at the time determined [illegible] ſelf into the apartment, and murders her [illegible] by miſtake, inſtead of her nephew Amaleus. [illegible] almoſt in diſtraction, ſhe begs the gods to [illegible] from the race of human-kind; they grant her prayer, and change her into a nightingale.

So by my choice avow'd, at length decide
These wasteful love-debates, a mourning bride——
A visionary thought I'll now relate,
Illustrate, if you know, the shadowed fate.
A team of twenty geese (a snow-white train!)
Fed near the limpid lake with golden grain,
Amuse my pensive hours. The bird of Jove
Fierce from his mountain-eyrie down-ward drove;
Each fav'rite fowl he pounc'd with deathful sway,
And back triumphant wing'd his airy way.
My pitying eyes effus'd a plenteous stream,
To view their death thus imag'd in a dream:
With tender sympathy to sooth my soul,
A troop of matrons, fancy-form'd, condole.
But whilst with grief and rage my bosom burn'd,
Sudden the tyrant of the skies return'd:
Perch'd on the battlements he thus began,
(In form an eagle, but in voice a man.)
O queen! no vulgar vision of the sky.
I come, prophetic of approaching joy:
View in his plumy form thy victor lord;
The geese (a glutton race) by thee deplor'd,
Portend the suitors fated to my sword.
This said, the pleasing feather'd omen ceas'd,
When from the downy bands of sleep releas'd,
Fast by the limpid lake my swanlike train
I found, insatiate of the golden grain.
The vision self explain'd (the chief replies)
Sincere reveals the sanction of the skies:

Ulyſſes ſpeaks his own return decreed;
And by his ſword the ſuitors ſure to bleed.
Hard is the taſk, and rare, the queen rejoin'd,
Impending deſtinies in dreams to find:
Immur'd within the ſilent bow'r of *Sleep*,
Two portals firm the various phantoms keep:

v. 657. *Immur'd within the ſilent bow'r of Sleep*, etc.] This ſeems to be a bold fiction, and commentators have laboured hard to ſhew the reaſon of it: ſome imagine, that by the horn is meant a tunic of the eye, which is called horny; and that the ivory repreſents the teeth: and that by theſe alluſions the poet intended to expreſs that what we hear ſpoken may be falſe, but what we ſee muſt infallibly be true: that is, according to this fable, the ivory gate emits falſhood, that of horn, truth. Others explain Homer by referring to the nature of horn and ivory, horn being pervious to the ſight, and ivory impenetrable. Dacier, from Euſtathius, gives us a very different ſolution; by horn which is tranſparant, Homer means the air, or heavens which are tranſlucent; by ivory, he denotes the earth which is groſs and opake: thus the dreams which come from the earth, that is, through the gate of ivory, are falſe; thoſe from heaven, or thro' the gate of horn, true. But it may be thought that there are no grounds, from the words of Homer, for ſuch an interpretation. I imagine that this fable is built upon a real foundation, and that there were places called the gates of falſhood and truth: Diodorus Siculus, in his ſecond book, deſcribing the ceremonies concerning the dead, mentions the gates of oblivion, of hatred and lamentation; and then adds, that there are other gates in the ſame place; namely, in Memphis in Ægypt, that are called the gates of verity, near which there is a ſtatue of juſtice without an head: now Homer in the twenty fourth Odyſſy places the region of dreams in the way to the infer-

Of iv'ry one: whence fit to mock the brain,
Of winged lies a light fantaſtic train:
The gate oppos'd pellucid valves adorn,
And columns fair incas'd with polliſh'd horn:
Where images of truth for paſſage wait,
With viſions manifeſt of future fate.
Not to this troop, I fear, that phantom ſoar'd,
Which ſpoke Ulyſſes to his realm reſtor'd;
Deluſive ſemblance!——But my remnant life
Heav'n ſhall determine in a gameful ſtrife:
With that fam'd bow Ulyſſes taught to bend,
For me the rival archers ſhall contend.
As on the liſted field he us'd to place
Six beams, oppos'd to fix in equal ſpace:
Elanc'd a-far by his unerring art,
Sure thro' fix circlets flew the whizzing dart.
So, when the ſun reſtores the purple day,
Their ſtrength and ſkill the ſuitors ſhall aſſay:

nal ſhades, and it is paſt diſpute that he borrows all theſe fables of Styx, Cocytus (that is, of the gates of hatred, lamentation, *etc.*) from Ægypt, and places them in hell, after Orpheus, who adapted all his ceremonies according to the rites of burial obſerved at Memphis, as Diodorus fully proves: if therefore he borrows the fable of the gates of oblivion, *etc.* from Ægypt, why may he not the ſtory of the gates of falſhood and verity? eſpecially ſince he takes his whole relation concerning hell from the cuſtoms of the Ægyptians; and this region of dreams is placed by him in the paſſage to hell. It may therefore not be impoſſible but this ſtory of the gates of ſleep, may have a real foundation, and be built upon the cuſtoms of the Ægyptians.

To him the ſpouſal honour is decreed,
Who thro' the rings directs the feather'd reed.
Torn from theſe walls (where long the kinder pow'rs
With pomp and joy have wing'd may youthful hours!)
On this poor breaſt no dawn of bliſs ſhall beam;
The pleaſure paſt ſupplies a copious theme
For many a dreary thought, and many a doleful dream.
Propoſe the ſportive lot, the chief replies,
Nor dread to name yourſelf the bowyer's prize:
Ulyſſes will ſurprize the unfiniſh'd game
Avow'd, and falſify the ſuitors' claim.
To whom with grace ſerene the queen rejoin'd:
In all thy ſpeech what pleaſing force I find!
O'er my ſuſpended woe they words prevail,
I part reluctant from the pleaſing tale.
But heav'n that knows what all terreſtrials need,
Repoſe to night, and toil to day decreed:
Grateful viciſſitude! Yet me withdrawn,
Wakeful to weep and watch the tardy dawn
Eſtabliſh'd uſe enjoins: to reſt and joy
Eſtrang'd, ſince dear Ulyſſes ſail'd to Troy!
Mean time inſtructed is the menial tribe
Your couch to faſhion as yourſelf preſcribe.
Thus affable, her bow'r the queen aſcends;
The ſov'reign ſtep a beauteous train attends:
There imag'd to her ſoul Ulyſſes roſe;
Down her pale cheek new-ſtreaming ſorrow flows:
'Till ſoft oblivious ſhade Minerva ſpread,
And o'er her eyes ambroſial ſlumber ſhed.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XX.

THE ARGUMENT.

While Ulyſſes lies in the veſtibule of the palace, he is witneſs to the diſorders of the women. Minerva comforts him and caſts him aſleep. At his awaking he deſires a favourable ſign from Jupiter, which is granted. The feaſt of Apollo is celebrated by the people, and the ſuitors banquet in the palace. Telemachus exerts his authority amongſt them, notwithſtanding which, Ulyſſes is inſulted by Cteſippus, and the reſt continue in their exceſſes. Strange prodigies are ſeen by Theoclymenus the augur, who explains them to the deſtruction of the wooers.

AN ample hide divine Ulyſſes ſpread,
And form'd of fleecy ſkins his humble bed:
(The remnants of the ſpoil the ſuitor crowd
In feſtival devour'd, and victims vow'd:)
Then o'er the chief, Eurynome the chaſte
With duteous care a downy carpet caſt:
With dire revenge his thoughtful boſom glows,
And ruminating wrath, he ſcorns repoſe.
As thus pavilion'd in the porch he lay,
Scenes of lewd loves his wakeful eyes ſurvey.

Whilſt to nocturnal joys impure, repair
With wanton glee, the proſtituted fair.
His heart with rage this new diſhonour ſtung,
Wav'ring his thoughts in dubious balance hung:
Or inſtant ſhould he quench the guilty flame
With their own blood, and intercept the ſhame;

v. 12. *With wanton glee, the proſtituted fair.*] Euſtathius expatiates upon the conduct of theſe female ſervants of Penelope. Silence and a decent reſerve (remarks that author) is the ornament of the fair ſex; levity and laughter betray them into an unguarded behaviour, and make them ſuſceptible of wanton impreſſions The Athenians, as Pauſanias informs us, had a temple ſacred to Love and Venus the whiſperer. Venus was called the whiſperer (ψιθυρος) becauſe they who there offered up their prayers applied their mouths to the ear of the ſtatue of that goddeſs, and whiſpered their petitions; an intimation, that women ought to govern their tongue, and not let it tranſgreſs either by loudneſs or loquacity. But this no ways affects the ladies of Great Britain; they ſpeak ſo well, they ſhould never be ſilent.

Ulyſſes, Homer tells us, is almoſt provoked to kill theſe females with his own hands: this has been imagined a thought unworthy of an hero. The like objection has been made againſt Æneas in Virgil (Æneid; lib. 2. ver. 567.

Thus, wand'ring in my way, without a guide,
The graceleſs Helen in the porch I ſpy'd
Of Veſta's temple: there ſhe lurk'd alone,
Muffled ſhe ſate, and what ſhe could, unknown;
Trembling with rage, the ſtrumpet I regard,
Reſolv'd to give her guilt the due reward.

Or to their luſt indulge a laſt embrace,
And let the peers conſummate the diſgrace?

This whole paſſage is ſaid to have been expunged from Virgil by Tucca and Varius; for as Virgil there expreſſes it,

'Tis true a ſoldier can ſmall honour gain,
And boaſt no conqueſt from a woman ſlain. Dryden.

But the objection is probably made with too great ſeverity, both againſt Homer and Virgil. It is no diſgrace to the beſt or braveſt man to be ſubject to ſuch paſſions as betray him into no unworthy actions: a hero is not ſuppoſed to be inſenſible; he diſtinguiſhes himſelf as ſuch, if he reſtrains them within the bounds of reaſon. Both Æneas and Ulyſſes are fired with a juſt indignation, and this is agreeable to human nature: but both of them proceed to no outragious action, and this ſhews that their paſſions are governed by ſuperior reaſon. However this reſentment of Ulyſſes is leſs liable to objection than that of Æneas: Ulyſſes ſubdues his indignation by the reflection of his own reaſon; but Virgil introduces a machine to compoſe the ſpirit of Æneas:

——————all ſhining heav'nly bright,
My mother ſtood reveal'd before my ſight,
She held my hand, the deſtin'd blow to break, *etc.*

It may be further added, that the caſe is very different between Æneas and Ulyſſes. The perſons whom Ulyſſes intends to puniſh are his ſubjects and ſervants, and ſuch a puniſhment would be no more than an act of juſtice, as he is their maſter and king; and we find in the ſequel of the Odyſſey, that he actually inflicts it. It ſhould therefore be thought an inſtance of Homer's judgment, in painting the diſorders of theſe ſervants in ſuch ſtrong colours, that we may acknowledge the juſtice, when he afterwards brings them to puniſhment.

Round his ſwol'n heart the murm'rous fury rowls;
As o'er her young the mother maſtiff growls,
And bays the ſtranger groom: ſo wrath compreſt
Recoiling, mutter'd thunder in his breaſt.
Poor ſuff'ring heart! he cry'd, ſupport the pain
Of wounded honour, and thy rage reſtrain.

v. 20. *As o'er her young the mother maſtiff growls*, etc.] This in the original is a very bold expreſſion, but Homer, to ſoften it, inſtances a compariſon, which reconciles us to it. Ennius has literally tranſlated it, as Spondanus obſerves:

——animuſque in pectore latrat.

That is word for word,

——Κραδίη δέ οἱ ἔνδον ὑλάκτει.

The ſimilitude itſelf is very expreſſive; as the maſtiff barks to guard her young, ſo labours the ſoul of Ulyſſes in defence of his ſon and wife, Penelope and Telemachus. Dacier was afraid that the compariſon could not be rendered with any beauty in the French tongue, and therefore has ſubſtituted another in the room of it, *Son coeur rugiſſoit au dedans de luy, comme un lion rugit autour d'une bergerie, ou il ne ſcauroit entrer*. But however more noble the lion may be than the maſtiff, it is evident that ſhe utterly deviates from the alluſion: the maſtiff rages in defence of her young, Ulyſſes of his ſon Telemachus: but how is this repreſented by a lion roaring round a fold, which he is not to defend, but to deſtroy? We have therefore choſen to follow Homer in the more humble but more expreſſive ſimilitude; and what will entirely reconcile us to it, is the great honour which was paid to dogs by the ancients: they were kept as a piece of ſtate by princes and heroes, and therefore a compariſon drawn from them was held to be as noble as if it had been drawn from a lion.

Not fiercer woes thy fortitude could foil
When the brave partners of thy ten years toil
Dire Polypheme devour'd: I then was freed
By patient prudence, from the death decreed.

Thus anchor'd safe on reason's peaceful coast,
Tempests of wrath his soul no longer tost;
Restless his body rolls, to rage resign'd:
As one who long with pale-ey'd famine pin'd,

v. 23. *Poor suff'ring heart! he cry'd support the pain*
Of wounded honour, and thy rage restrain] These two verses are quoted by Plato in his Phædo, where he treats of the soul's immortality; he makes use of them to prove that Homer understood the soul to be uncompounded and distinct from the body. "If the soul, 'argues that author, were a compounded substance, if it 'were harmony (as some philosophically assert) she would 'never act discordantly from the parts which compose 'it; but we see the contrary; we see the soul guide and 'govern the parts of which she herself is pretended to be 'composed; she resists, threatens and restrains our pas-'sions, our fears, avarice and anger: in short, the soul 'speaks to the body as to a substance of a nature entire-'ly different from its own. Homer therefore evidently 'understood that the soul ought to govern and direct the 'passions, and that it is of a nature more divine than 'harmony.'

This is undoubtedly very just reasoning: and there is an expression, observes Dacier, that bears the same import in the holy scriptures: "The heart of David smote "him when he numbered the people." There is this difference in Homer by *heart* is understood the corporeal substance, in the scriptures the spiritual; but both make a manifest distinction between the soul and the body.

v. 32. *As one who long*, etc.] No passage in the whole Odyssey has fallen under more ridicule than this

The sav'ry cates on glowing embers cast
Incessant turns, in patient for repast:

comparison. Monsieur Perault is particularly severe upon it: Homer (says that critic) compares Ulysses turning in his bed to a black pudding broiling on a gridiron; whereas the truth is, he compares that hero turning and tossing in his bed, burning with impatience to satisfy himself with the blood of the suitors, to a man in sharp hunger preparing the entrails of a victim over a great fire; and the agitation represents the agitation of Ulysses. Homer compares not the thing, but the persons.

Boileau, in his notes upon Longinus, answers this objection. It is notorious that the belly of some animals was one of the most delicious dishes amongst the ancients: that the *sumex*, or sow's belly, was boasted of for its excellence by the Romans, and forbidden by a sumptuary law as too voluptuous. Besides, the Greek word used to express a black pudding was not invented in the days of Homer. Ogilby indeed thus renders it:

As one a pudding broiling on the coals.

But you will ask, is not the allusion mean at best, and does it not convey a low image? Monsieur Dacier answers in the negative, in his notes upon Aristotle's Poetics. The comparison is borrowed from sacrifices which yielded blood and fat, and was therefore so far from being despicable, that it was looked upon with veneration by antiquity. Lib. 1. of the Iliad.

On these, in double cawls involved with art,
The choicest morsels lay from every part.

The cawls and the choicest morsels were the fat of the victim, selected as the best part of it, to be offered to the gods. We may find that the thought was noble in the oriental language, for the author of Ecclesiasticus makes use of it, xlvii. 2. "As is the fat taken from the peace-"offering, so was David chosen out of the children of Is-

Ulyſſes ſo, from ſide to ſide devolv'd,
In ſelf-debate the ſuitors doom reſolv'd.
When in the form of mortal nymph array'd,
From heav'n deſcends the Jove-born martial maid;
And hov'ring o'er his head in view confeſs'd,
The goddeſs thus her fav'rite care addreſs'd.
Oh thou, of mortals moſt inur'd to woes!
Why rowl thoſe eyes unfriended of repoſe?
Beneath thy palace roof forget thy care;
Bleſt in thy queen! bleſt in thy blooming heir!
Whom, to the gods when ſuppliant fathers bow,
They name the ſtandard of their deareſt vow.
Juſt is thy kind reproach (the chief rejoin'd)
Deeds full of fate diſtract my various mind,
In contemplation rapt. This hoſtile crew
What ſingle arm hath proweſs to ſubdue?
Or if by Jove's, and thy auxiliar aid,
They're doom'd to bleed; O ſay, celeſtial maid!

" rael." And the ſame alluſion, which was uſed to repreſent the worth and excellence of David, could be no degradation to Ulyſſes.

But what is underſtood by the 'belly of the beaſt, full 'of fat and blood?' Boileau is of opinion that thoſe words denote the fat and the blood which are in thoſe parts of an animal naturally: but he is in an error, as appears evidently from theſe lines, lib. 18. of the Odyſſey.

Γαςέρες ἄι δ' ἀιγῶν κέατ' ἐν πυρὶ· τάας δ' ἐπὶ δόρπῳ
Κατθέμεθα κνίσης τε καὶ ἄιματος ἐμπλήσαντες.

Implentes ſanguine et pinguedine, in coena deponamus; a demonſtration that Homer intends not the natural fat and blood of the animal.

Where shall Ulysses shun, or how sustain,
Nations embattel'd to revenge the slain?
Oh impotence of faith! Minerva cries,
If man on frail unknowing man relies,
Doubt you the gods? Lo Pallas' self descends,
Inspires thy counsels, and thy toils attends.

v. 56. *If man on frail unknowing man relies, Doubt you the gods?*]

There is excellent reasoning in this: if a friend, whom we know to be wise and powerful, advises us, we are ready to follow his instructions; the divine Being gives us his counsel, and we refuse it. Monsieur Dacier observes that Epictetus had this passage in his view, and beautified his morality with it. 'The protection of a prince or potentate (says that author) gives us full tranquillity, and banishes from us all uneasy apprehension. We have an all-powerful Being for our protector, and for our father; and yet the knowledge of it is not sufficient to drive away our fears, inquietudes and discontents.'

What Homer further puts into the mouth of the goddess of wisdom is consonant to sacred verity, and agrees with the language of the holy scripture; Psalm xxvii. 3. "Though an host of men were laid against me, yet shall "not my heart be afraid."

The poet almost in every book mentions the destruction of the suitors by the single hand of Ulysses, to reconcile us to it by degrees, that we may not be shocked with the great catastrophe of the poem as incredible: it is particularly judicious to insist upon it in this place in a manner so solemn to prepare us for the approaching event. If the destruction of the suitors should appear humanly improbable by being ascribed solely to Ulysses, it is at least reconcileable to divine probability, and becomes credible through the intervention of a goddess.

In me affianc'd, fortify thy breaſt
Tho' myriads leagu'd thy rightful claim conteſt;
My ſure divinity ſhall bear the ſhield,
And edge thy ſword to reap the glorious field.
Now, pay the debt to craving nature due,
Her faded pow'rs with balmy reſt renew.
She ceas'd: ambroſial ſlumbers ſeal his eyes;
His care diſſolves in viſionary joys:
The goddeſs, pleas'd, regains her natal ſkies.
Not ſo the queen; the downy bands of ſleep
By grief relax'd, ſhe wak'd again to weep;
A gloomy pauſe enſu'd of dumb deſpair;
Then thus her fate invok'd, with fervent pray'r.
Diana! ſpeed thy deathful ebon dart,
And cure the pangs of this convulſive heart.
Snatch me, ye whirlwinds! far from human race,
Toſt thro' the void, illimitable ſpace:

v. 72. *Diana! ſpeed thy deathful ebon dart*, etc.] I doubt not but the reader will be pleaſed with the beauty of this ſoliloquy. There is an aſſemblage of tender images and moving complaints, and yet they are ſuch as betray no meanneſs of ſpirit. The lamentation of Penelope is the lamentation of a queen and heroine; ſhe mourns, but it is with dignity. The poet makes a good uſe of her ſorrows, and they excellently ſuſtain her character of perſevering to elude the addreſſes of the ſuitors, when ſhe wiſhes even to die rather than to yield to them.

But I confeſs the inſerting ſo many particularities of the daughters of Pandarus, *etc.* greatly leſſens the pathetic of this ſpeech.

v. 74. *Snatch me, ye whirlwinds!* etc.] The ancients (ſays Dacier) were perſuaded that ſome perſons were car-

Or if dismounted from the rapid cloud,
Me with his whelming wave let Ocean shrowd!
So, Pandarus, thy hopes, three orphans fair
Were doom'd to wander thro' the devious air;
Thy self untimely and thy consort dy'd,
But four celestials both your cares supply'd.
Venus in tender delicacy rears
With honey, milk, and wine their infant years:
Imerial Juno to their youth assign'd
A form majestic, and sagacious mind:

ried away by storms and whirlwinds. I would rather imagine such expressions to be entirely figurative and poetical; it is probable that what gave occasion to these fictions might be no more than the sudden deaths of some persons; and their disappearance was ascribed, in the language of poetry, to storms and whirlwinds. The Orientals delighted in such bold figures. Job xxvii. 21. "The east wind carrieth him away, and as a storm hur-"rieth him out of his place." And Isaiah xli. 16. "The "wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall "scatter them."

v. 82. *Venus in tender delicacy rears*
With honey, milk, and wine, their infant years.]

Monsieur Dacier observes upon this passage: Venus is said to feed these infants with wine, milk, and honey; that is, she nursed them in their infancy with plenty and abundance. For this is the import of the expression: a land flowing with milk and honey means a land of the greatest fertility, as is evident from the writings of Moses. So the prophet. "Butter and honey shall he eat, "till he knows how to refuse the evil and chuse the "good;" that is, till the age of discretion.

v. 84. *Imperial Juno to their youth assign'd*
A form majestic, and sagacious mind]

It may seem that Homer ascribes improper gifts to this

With ſhapely growth Diana grac'd their bloom;
And Pallas taught the texture of the loom.
But whilſt to learn their lots in nuptial love,
Bright Cytherea ſought the bow'r of Jove;
(The god ſupreme, to whoſe eternal eye
The regiſters of fate expanded lie)
Wing'd Harpies ſnatch'd th' unguarded charge away,
And to the Furies bore a grateful prey.

goddeſs; wiſdom is the portion of Minerva, beauty of Venus, why then are they here aſcribed to Juno? Spondanus calls this an inſolvable difficulty. Dacier explains it by ſaying, that the beauty of princeſſes is different from that of perſons of an inferior ſtation; their beauty conſiſts in a majeſty that is every way great and noble, and ſtrikes with awe, very different from the little affectations and formal ſoftneſſes of inferior beauty; the former kind is the gift of Venus to the lower part of the fair ſex; the latter is beſtowed on princeſſes and queens, by Juno the regent of the ſkies.

v. 92. *Wing'd Harpies ſnatch'd the unguarded charge away.*] It is not evident what is meant by theſe princeſſes being carried away by the Harpies: Euſtathius thinks that they wandered from their own country, and fell into the power of cruel governeſſes, whoſe ſeverities the poet aſcribes to the ἐρινύες, or *Furies*. Dacier imagines, that theſe two princeſſes having ſeen the unhappy fate of their ſiſter Aedon (who was married to Zethus, and ſlew her own ſon) feared a like calamity; and dreading marriage, retired to ſome diſtant ſolitude, where never being heard of, it gave room for the fiction. It muſt be allowed that the thought excellently agrees with the wiſhes of Penelope: theſe princeſſes were taken away at the point of their marriage; Penelope believes herſelf to be in the ſame condition, and wiſhes to be loſt rather than ſubmit to ſecond nuptials. This ſpeech has a further ef-

Be such my lot! Or thou Diana speed
Thy shaft, and send me joyful to the dead:
To seek my lord among the warrior-train,
Ere second vows my bridal faith profane.
When woes the waking sense alone assail,
Whilst night extends her soft oblivious veil,
Of other wretches care the torture ends:
No truce the warfare of my heart suspends!
The night renews the day distracting theme,
And airy terrors fable ev'ry dream.
The last alone a kind illusion wrought,
And to my bed my lov'd Ulysses brought,
In manly bloom, and each majestic grace,
As when for Troy he left my fond embrace:
Such raptures in my beating bosom rise,
I deem it sure a vision of the skies.
Thus, whilst Aurora mounts her purple throne,
In audible laments she breathes her moan:

fect; we find Penelope reduced to the utmost exigency, she has no further subterfuge: the poet therefore judiciously paints this exigency in the strongest colours, to shew the necessity of unravelling the intrigue of the poem in the conclusion of the Odyssey.

v. 107. *As when for Troy he left my fond embrace.*] This little circumstance is not without a good effect; it shews that the whole soul of Penelope was possessed with the image of Ulysses. Homer adds, 'such as he was 'when he sailed to Troy;' which is inserted to take off our wonder that she should not discover him; thus Ulysses in disguise is not like the Ulysses she formerly knew, and now delineates in her imagination. Eustathius.

v. 110. *Thus, whilst Aurora mounts her purple*

The ſounds aſſault Ulyſſes' wakeful ear;
Miſ-judging of the cauſe, a ſudden fear
Of his arrival known, the chief alarms;
He thinks the queen is ruſhing to his arms.
Up ſpringing from his couch, with active haſte
The fleece and carpet in the dome he plac'd:
(The hide, without, imbib'd the morning air.)
And thus the gods invok'd, with ardent pray'r.

Jove, and ethereal thrones! with heav'n to friend
If the long ſeries of my woes ſhall end;
Of human race now riſing from repoſe,
Let one a bliſsful omen here diſcloſe:

throne.] This is the morning of the fortieth day; for part of the eighteenth book, and the whole nineteenth and ſo far of the twentieth book, contain no more time than the evening of the thirty ninth day.

v. 113. ——*a ſudden fear*
Of his arrival known, the chief alarms.]

I was at a loſs for an explication of this line, until I found it in Euſtathius; for why ſhould Ulyſſes imagine that Penelope knew him to be Ulyſſes, after a ſpeech that expreſſed ſo much concern for his abſence? Ulyſſes, having only heard the voice, not diſtinguiſhed the words of her lamentation, miſtakes the tears of Penelope for tears of joy; he ſuſpects that the diſcovery is made by Euryclea or Telemachus; that they have told her truth to give her comfort; and fears leſt in the tranſport of her joy ſhe ſhould act ſomething that would betray him to the ſuitors, and prevent his deſigns: he therefore immediately withdraws, and makes a prayer to heaven for a ſign to reaſſure his hopes, that he may proceed with confidence to their deſtruction.

v. 120. *Jove, and ethereal thrones*——
123. ——*a bliſsful omen*——]

And to confirm my faith, propitious Jove!
Vouchsafe the sanction of a sign above.
Whilst lowly thus the chief adoring bows,
The pitying god his guardian aid avows.
Loud from a saphire sky his thunder sounds:
With springing hope the hero's heart rebounds.

The construction in the Greek is ungrammatical; for after Ζεῦ πάτερ in the singular, the poet immediately adds ἢ μ' ἐθέλοντες in the plural number; τὰ λοιπὰ δαιμόνια are implied, says Eustathius, so that θεοὶ is understood, which rectifies the construction.

The reader will fully understand the import of this prayer, from the nature of omens, and the notions of them amongst the ancients: *If*, says Ulysses, *my prayer is heard, let there be a voice from within the palace to certify me of it*; and immediately a voice is heard, *O Jupiter, may this day be the last to the suitors!* Such speeches as fell accidentally from any person where held ominous, and one of the antient ways of divination: Ulysses understands it as such, and accepts the omen. It was in use among the Romans, as appears from Tully of Divination. When P. Æmilius was going to war with Perseus king of the Macedonians, he found his little daughter in tears: *O father*, says she, *Perseus is dead!* meaning her little dog named Perseus; Æmilius immediately replied, *O daughter, I embrace the omen*, applying it to Perseus king of the Macedonians; who was afterwards conquered by him, and died a captive in Rome. The same practice was used by the Hebrews, it was called Bath Kol. This is an instance of it: two Rabbies desiring to see Samuel a Babylonish doctor, *let us follow*, said they, *the hearing of Bath Kol*; travelling therefore near a school, they heard a boy reading these words out of *Samuel* xxv. 1. *And Samuel died.* They observed it, and found that their friend was dead. The Sortes Virgilianæ afterwards were much of this kind.

v. 128. *Loud from a saphire sky*———] It was this

Soon, with conſummate joy to crown his pray'r,
An omen'd voice invades his raviſh'd ear.
Beneath a pile that cloſe the dome adjoin'd,
Twelve female ſlaves the gift of Ceres grind;

circumſtance, of thunder burſting from a *ſerene ſky*, that made it ominous: it was noted as ſuch amongſt the Romans in the books of the augurs; and Horace brings it as a proof againſt the opinions of Epicurus.

——— *Dieſpiter*
Igni coruſca nubila dividens,
Plerumque per purum tonantes
Egit equos, volucremque currum.

Virgil likewiſe ſpeaks of thunder as ominous, when Anchiſes ſaw the lambent flame round the head of Iulus: he prays to Jupiter and immediately it thunders.

Vix ea fatus erat ſenior ſubitoque fragore
Intonuit.

The Stoics drew an argument from thunder from a ſerene air againſt the doctrines of Epicurus, who taught that the gods had no regard of human affairs; for they concluded ſuch thunder to be præter-natural, and an argument of a divine providence.

v. 133. *Twelve female ſlaves the gift of Ceres grind.*] This little particularity ſhews us the great profuſion of the ſuitors, who employed twelve mills to find them bread. There is a particular energy in the word ἐπιῤῥώοντο; it denotes the great labour and aſſiduity of theſe people in preparing the bread, and conſequently the great waſte of the ſuitors. It likewiſe preſerves a piece of antiquity, that kings formerly had mills in their palaces to provide for their families, and that theſe mills were attended by women; I ſuppoſe becauſe preparing bread was an houſhold care, and therefore fell to the lot of female ſervants.

Taſk'd for the royal board to bolt the bran
From the pour flour (the growth and ſtrength of man)
Diſcharging to the day the labour due,
Now early to repoſe the reſt withdrew;
One maid, unequal to the taſk aſſign'd,
Still turn'd the toilſome mill with anxious mind:
And thus in bitterneſs of ſoul divin'd.

Father of gods and men! whoſe thunders rowl
O'er the Cerulean vault, and ſhake the pole;
Whoe'er from heav'n has gain'd this rare oſtent,
(Of granted vows a certain ſignal ſent)
In this bleſt moment of accepted pray'r,
Piteous, regard a wretch conſum'd with care!
Inſtant, O Jove! confound the ſuitor train,
For whom o'er-told I grind the golden grain:
Far from this dome the lewd devourers caſt,
And be this feſtival decreed their laſt!

Big with their doom denounc'd in earth and ſky,
Ulyſſes' heart dilates with ſecret joy.
Mean-time the menial train with unctuous wood
Heap'd high the genial hearth, Vulcanian food:
When, early dreſs'd, advanc'd the royal heir;
With manly graſp he wav'd a martial ſpear,
A radiant ſabre grac'd his purple zone,
And on his foot the golden ſandal ſhone.
His ſteps impetuous to the portal preſs'd;
And Euryclea thus he there addreſs'd.

Say thou, to whom my youth its nurture owes,
Was care for due refection, and repoſe,

Beſtow'd the ſtranger gueſt? Or waits he griev'd,
His age not honour'd, nor his wants reliev'd?
Promiſcuous grace on all the queen confers;
(In woes bewilder'd, oft the wiſeſt errs.)
The wordy vagrant to the dole aſpires,
And modeſt worth with noble ſcorn retires.

She thus: O ceaſe that ever-honour'd name
To bleniſh now; it ill deſerves your blame.
A bowl of gen'rous wine ſuffic'd the gueſt;
In vain the queen the night-refection preſt;
Nor wou'd he court repoſe in downy ſtate,
Unbleſs'd, abandon'd to the rage of fate!
A hide beneath the portico was ſpread,
And fleecy ſkins compos'd an humble bed:
A downy carpet caſt with duteous care,
Secur'd him from the keen nocturnal air.

His cornel javelin pois'd, with regal port,
To the ſage Greeks conven'd in Themis' court,
Forth-iſſuing from the dome the prince repair'd:
Two dogs of chace, a lion-hearted guard,

v. 165. *Promiſcuous grace on all the queen confers.*] The ſpeech of Telemachus may ſeem to be wanting in filial reſpect, as it appears to condemn the conduct of his mother: but (remarks Euſtathius) the contrary is to be gathered from it. His blame is really a commendation; it ſhews that her affection was ſo great for Ulyſſes, that ſhe received every vagrant honourably, who deceived her with falſe news about him; and that other perſons who brought no tidings of him, though men of greater worth, were leſs acceptable.

v. 180. *To the ſage Greeks conven'd in Themis' court,*
Forth-iſſuing from the dome the prince repair'd.]

Behind him sow'rly stalk'd. Without delay
The dame divides the labour of the day;
Thus urging to the toil the menial train.
What marks of luxury the marble stain!
Its wonted lustre let the floor regain;
The seats with purple clothe in order due;
And let th' absterfive sponge the board renew:

It was customary for kings and magistrates to go early every morning into the public assemblies, to distribute justice, and take care of public affairs: but this assembly contributing nothing to the action of the Odyssey, the poet passes it over in a cursory manner without any enlargement. Eustathius.

v. 189. *And let th' absterfive sponge the board renew.*] The table was not antiently covered with linen, but carefully cleansed with wet sponges. Thus Arrian, ἄρον τὰς περιπέζας, σπόγγισον: And Martial:

Hæc tibi sorte datur tergendis spongia mensis.

They made use of no napkins to wipe their hands, but the soft and fine part of the bread, which they called ἀπομαγδαλιαι, which afterwards they threw to the dogs; this custom is mentioned in the Odyssey, *lib.* 10.

Ὡς δ' ὅταν ἀμφὶ ἄνακτα κύνες δαίτηθεν ἴοῦσα
Σαίνωσ', ἀι δ' ἐ γὰρ τε φέρει μειλίγματα θυμῷ.

As from some feast a man returning late,
His faithful dogs all meet him at the gate,
Rejoicing round, some morsel to receive,
Such as the good man ever wont to give.

The morsel in the translation, and the μειλίγματα, in the Greek, mean these pieces of bread, or ἀπομαγδαλίαι with which the ancients wiped their hands after eating, and then threw to the dogs.

Let ſome refreſh the vaſe's ſullied mold;
Some bid the goblets boaſt their native gold:
Some to the ſpring, with each a jar, repair,
And copious waters pure for bathing bear:
Diſpatch! for ſoon the ſuitors will aſſay
The lunar feaſt-rites to the god of day.

She ſaid; with duteous haſte a bevy fair
Of twenty virgins to the ſpring repair:
With varied toils the reſt adorn the dome.
Magnificent, and blithe, the ſuitors come.
Some wield the ſounding ax; the dodder'd oaks
Divide, obedient to the forceful ſtrokes.
Soon from the fount, with each a brimming urn,
(Eumæus in their train) the maids return.

v. 195. *The lunar feaſt-rites to the god of day.*] This was the laſt day of one month, and the firſt of the following: the Greek months were lunar, the firſt day of every month was a day of great ſolemnity, and it was conſecrated to Apollo, the author and fountain of light. Ulyſſes had ſaid, *lib.* 14. *v.* 186.

Ere the next moon increaſe, or this decay,
His antient realms Ulyſſes ſhall ſurvey;
In blood and each proud oppreſſor mourn.

Τῷ μὲν φθίνοντος, μηνὸς τῷ δ' ἰσαμένοιο.

This, ſays Solon in Plutarch, means that Ulyſſes ſhall return on the laſt day of the month preciſely; and here we find it verified. Ulyſſes diſcovers himſelf upon this day, and kills the ſuitors: by his return, in the foregoing period, is meant his diſcovery; for he was returned when he made that aſſertion to Eumæus. It is therefore probable, that the above recited verſe was rightly interpreted by Solon.

Three porkers for the feaſt, all brawny chin'd,
He brought; the choiceſt of the tusky kind:
In lodgments firſt ſecure his care he view'd,
Then to the king this friendly ſpeech renew'd:
Now ſay ſincere, my gueſt! the ſuitor train
Still treat thy worth with lordly dull diſdain;
Or ſpeaks their deed a bounteous mind humane?
Some pitying god (Ulyſſes ſad reply'd)
With vollied vengeance blaſt their tow'ring pride!
No conſcious bluſh, no ſenſe of right reſtrains
The tides of luſt that ſwell their boiling veins:
From vice to vice their appetites are toſt,
All cheaply fated at another's coſt!
While thus the chief his woes indignant told,
Melanthius, maſter of the bearded fold,
The goodlieſt goats of all the royal herd
Spontaneous to the ſuitors' feaſt preferr'd:
Two grooms aſſiſtant bore the victims bound;
With quav'ring cries the vaulted roofs reſound:
And to the chief auſtere, aloud began
The wretch unfriendly to the race of man.
Here, vagrant, ſtill? offenſive to my lords!
Blows have more energy than airy words;
Thoſe arguments I'll uſe; nor conſcious ſhame,
Nor threats, thy bold intruſion will reclaim.
On this high feaſt the meaneſt vulgar boaſt
A plenteous board! Hence! ſeek another hoſt!
Rejoinder to the churl the king diſdain'd,
But ſhook his head, and riſing wrath reſtrain'd.

From Cephalenia croſs the ſurgy main
Philætius late arriv'd, a faithful ſwain.
A ſteer ungrateful to the bull's embrace,
And goats he brought, the pride of all their race;
Imported in a ſhallop not his own:
The dome re-echo'd to their mingled moan.
Strait to the guardian of the briſtly kind
He thus began, benevolent of mind.
What gueſt is he, of ſuch majeſtic air?
His lineage and paternal clime declare:
Dim thro' th' eclipſe of fate, the rays divine
Of ſovereign ſtate with faded ſplendor ſhine.
If monarchs by the gods are plung'd in woe,
To what abyſs are we foredoom'd to go!
Then affable he thus the chief addreſs'd,
Whilſt with pathetic warmth his hand he preſs'd.
Stranger! may fate a milder aſpect ſhew,
And ſpin thy future with a whiter clue!

v. 237. *Imported in a ſhallop*——] To underſtand this paſſage, it is neceſſary to remember that Melanthius and Philætius fed their flocks and herds in Cephalenia, an adjacent iſland, under the dominion of Ulyſſes; but living in different parts of it, they are brought over in ſeparate veſſels, by different ferrymen, πορθμῆες, as Homer expreſſes it.

v. 245. *If monarchs by the gods*, etc.] This is the reaſoning of Philætius: kings are in a peculiar manner the care of the gods; and if the gods exempt not kings from calamities, how can inferior perſons (ſays Dacier) expect to be exempted, or complain in the day of adverſity? but I perſuade myſelf the words have a deeper ſenſe, and mean Ulyſſes; 'Well may vagrants ſuffer, when kings, 'ſuch as Ulyſſes, are not free from afflictions.'

O Jove! for ever deaf to human cries;
The tyrant, not the father of the skies!
Unpiteous of the race thy will began,
The fool of fate, thy manufacture, man,
With penury, contempt, repulse, and care,
The gauling load of life is doom'd to bear.
Ulysses from his state a wand'rer still,
Upbraids thy pow'r, thy wisdom, or thy will:

v. 251. *O Jove! for ever deaf to human cries;*
The tyrant, not the father of the skies!]

These words are to be ascribed to the excess of sorrow which Philætius feels for the sufferings of Ulysses; for they certainly transgress the bounds of reason. But if we consider the state of theology in Homer's time, the sentence will appear less offensive; "How can Jupiter (says "Philætius) who is our father, throw his children into "such an abyss of misery? Thou, oh Jove, hast made us, "yet hast no compassion when we suffer." It is no easy matter to answer this argument from the heathen theology, and no wonder therefore if it confounds the reason of Philætius; but we who have certain hopes of a future state, can readily solve the difficulty: that state will be a time of retribution; it will amply recompence the good man for all his calamities, or as Milton expresses,

Will justify the ways of God to men.

It may be observed in general that this introduction of Philætius and his speech, so warm in the cause of Ulysses, is inserted here with admirable judgment; the poet intends to make use of his assistance in the destruction of the suitors; he therefore brings him in giving Ulysses full assurance of his fidelity; so that when that hero reveals himself to him, he does not depart from his cautious character, being before certified of his honesty.

I will only add that Philætius is not to be looked upon

O monarch ever dear!——O man of woe!——
Fresh flow my tears and shall for ever flow!
Like thee, poor stranger guest, deny'd his home!
Like thee, in rags obscene decreed to roam!
Or haply perish'd on some distant coast,
In Stygian gloom he glides a pensive ghost!

as a common servant, but as an officer of state and dignity: and whatever has been said in these annotations concerning Eumæus may be applied to Philætius; he is here called ὄρχαμος ἀνδρων, a title of honour, and Ulysses promises to marry him into his own family in the sequel of the Odyssey; consequently he is a personage worthy to be an actor in epic poetry.

v. 260. *Fresh flow my tears, and shall for ever flow.*] The words in the original are ιδιον ὡς ἐνοησα, and they are very differently explained by Dacier and Eustathius: ἴδιον, τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ιδροσα, ἠγωνιασα, "I have sweated and "been in an agony at the thought of the severe dispen-"sations of Jupiter;" this is the interpretation of Eustathius. Dacier takes ιδιον to be an adjective, and then it must be connected with the preceding period.

Οὐκ ἔλεαιρεις ἄνδρας, ἐπὴν δὴ γείνεαι αὐτὸς,
Μισγέμεναι κακότητι, καὶ ἄλγεσι λευγαλέοισι,
Ἴδιον ὡς ἐνόησα.

Ut privatim, vel domestico admonitus sum exemplo, for so we may render ιδιον, meaning Ulysses; then the sense will be this; *Jupiter, though thou hast made us, thou hast no compassion upon mankind, thou castest us into evils and misery; as I have learned by a private or domestic instance, namely in the person of Ulysses.* If my judgment were of any weight, I should recommend this interpretation rather than that of Eustathius, which seems to be a forced one, and I remember no instance of this nature in Homer; but the preference is submitted to the reader's decision.

O, grateful for the good his bounty gave,
I'll grieve, 'till sorrow sink me to the grave!
His kind protecting hand my youth preferr'd
The regent of his Cephalenian herd:
With vast increase beneath my care it spreads,
A stately breed! and blackens far the meads.
Constrain'd, the choicest beeves I thence import,
To cram these cormorants that croud his court:
Who in partition seek his realm to share;
Nor human right, nor wrath divine revere.
Since here resolv'd oppressive these reside,
Contending doubts my anxious heart divide:
Now, to some foreign clime inclin'd to fly,
And with the royal herd protection buy:
Then, happier thoughts return the nodding scale,
Light mounts despair, alternate hopes prevail:
In op'ning prospects of ideal joy
My king returns; the proud usurpers die.

To whom the chief: In thy capacious mind
Since daring zeal with cool debate is join'd;
Attend a deed already ripe in fate:
Attest, oh Jove, the truth I now relate!
This sacred truth attest each genial pow'r,
Who bless the board, and guard this friendly bow'r?
Before thou quite the dome (nor long delay)
Thy wish produc'd in act, with pleas'd survey,
Thy wond'ring eyes shall view: his rightful reign
By arms avow'd Ulysses shall regain,
And to the shades devote the suitor-train.

O Jove ſupreme, the raptur'd ſwain replies,
With deeds conſummate ſoon the promis'd joys!
Theſe aged nerves, with new-born vigor ſtrung,
In that bleſt cauſe ſhou'd emulate the young——
Aſſents Eumæus to the pray'r addreſt;
And equal ardors fire his loyal breaſt.
Meantime the ſuitors urge the prince's fate,
And deathful arts employ the dire debate:
When in his airy tour, the bird of Jove
Truſs'd with his ſinewy pounce a trembling dove:
Siniſter to their hope! this omen ey'd
Amphinomus, who thus preſaging cry'd.
The gods from force and fraud the prince defend;
O peers! the ſanguinary ſcheme ſuſpend:
Your future thought let ſable fate employ;
And give the preſent hour to genial joy.
From council ſtrait th' aſſenting peerage ceas'd,
And in the dome prepar'd the genial feaſt.

v. 305. *Amphinomus, who thus preſaging cry'd.*] It may be aſked why Amphinomus gives this interpretation to the prodigy? and why might not the eagle denote the ſuitors, and the pidgeon Telemachus? no doubt but ſuch an interpretation would have been ſpecious, but contrary to the rules of augury. The eagle is the king of birds, and muſt therefore of neceſſity denote the chief perſonage, and conſequently could only be applied to Ulyſſes, or Telemachus. Amphinomus thus interprets it, and the ſuitors acquieſce in his interpretation.

v. 311. *And in the dome prepar'd the genial feaſt.*] The ancients, ſays Euſtathius, obſerve that this is the only place where the ſuitors offer any ſacrifice throughout the whole Odyſſey, and that there is no inſtance at all,

Diſ-rob'd, their veſts apart in order lay,
Then all with ſpeed ſuccinct the victims ſlay;
With ſheep and ſhaggy goats the porkers bled,
And the proud ſteer was on the marble ſpread.
With fire prepar'd they deal the morſels round,
Wine roſy bright the brimming goblets crown'd,
By ſage Eumæus born: the purple tide
Melanthius from an ample jar ſupply'd:

that they make any prayer to the gods. But is it evident from this place, that this is a ſacrifice? it is true the ſacrificial term of ἱέρευον is mentioned; but perhaps that word may not denote a ſacrifice; for ἱερεῖα, though it primarily ſignifies the fleſh of animals offered to the gods, yet in a leſs proper acceptation implies the fleſh of all animals indifferently. Thus Athenæus, τροφὴν, τὴν τῶν νεογνῶν ἱερείων, which muſt be rendered, *the fleſh of young animals*. Thus *lib.* 7, ἐναπλόστερα τὰ νύκτωρ θυόμενα ἱερεῖα, *the fleſh of animals that are killed by night ſooneſt putrifies*; and Galen uſes ζῷον, and ἱερεῖον, for an animal indiſcriminately. The reaſon is, becauſe originally no animal was ever ſlain, but ſome part of it was offered to the gods, and in this ſenſe every ζῷον was ἱερεῖον. If we conſult the context in Homer, it muſt be allowed that there is no other word but ἱέρευον that diſtinguiſhes this from a common repaſt, through the whole deſcription; and if that word will bear a remote ſignification, as ἱερεῖον does, I ſhould conclude that this is no ſacrifice. Nay, if it ſhould be found that ἱέρευον implies of neceſſity a religious act, yet it will not prove that this is more than a cuſtomary meal, ſince the ancients at all entertainments made libations to the gods: what may ſeem to ſtrengthen this conjecture is, that the poet immediately adds, that the Greeks, Ἀχαιοὶ, ſacrificed in the grove of Apollo; without mentioning that the ſuitors partook in the ſacrifice: nay they ſeem to be feaſting in the palace, while the Greeks are offering in the grove.

High canisters of bread Philætius plac'd;
And eager all devour the rich repast.
Dispos'd apart, Ulysses shares the treat!
A trivet-table, and ignobler seat,
The prince appoints; but to his sire assigns
The tasteful inwards, and nectareous wines.
Partake, my guest, he cry'd without controul
The social feast, and drain the cheering bowl:
Dread not the railer's laugh, nor ruffian's rage;
No vulgar roof protects thy honour'd age;
This dome a refuge to thy wrongs shall be,
From my great sire too soon devolv'd to me!
Your violence and scorn, ye suitors, cease,
Lest arms avenge the violated peace.

Aw'd by the prince, so haughty, brave and young,
Rage gnaw'd the lip, amazement chain'd the tongue.
Be patient, peers! at length Antinous cries;
The threats of vain imperious youth despise:
Would Jove permit the meditated blow,
That stream of eloquence should cease to flow.

Without reply vouchsaf'd, Antinous ceas'd:
Mean-while the pomp of festival increas'd:
By heralds rank'd, in marshall'd order move
The city-tribes, to pleas'd Apollo's grove:

v. 323. *A trivet-table and ignobler seat.*] This circumstance is not inserted unnecessarily; the table is suitable to the disguise of Ulysses, and it might have created a jealousy in the suitors if Telemachus had used him with greater distinction.

Beneath the verdure of which awful ſhade,
The lunar hecatomb they grateful laid;
Partook the ſacred feaſt, and ritual honours paid.
But the rich banquet in the dome prepar'd,
(An humble ſide-board ſet) Ulyſſes ſhar'd.
Obſervant of the prince's high beheſt,
His menial train attend the ſtranger gueſt;
Whom Pallas with unpard'ning fury fir'd,
By lordly pride and keen reproach inſpir'd.
A Samian peer, more ſtudious than the reſt
Of vice, who teem'd with many a dead-born jeſt;
And urg'd, for title to a conſort queen,
Unnumber'd acres arable and green;
(Cteſippus nam'd) this lord Ulyſſes ey'd,
And thus burſt out, impoſthumate with pride.

The ſentence I propoſe, ye peers, attend:
Since due regard muſt wait the prince's friend,
Let each a token of eſteem beſtow:
This gift acquits the dear reſpect I owe;
With which he nobly may diſcharge his ſeat,
And pay the menials for the maſter's treat.

He ſaid; and of the ſteer before him plac'd,
That ſinewy fragment at Ulyſſes caſt,
Where to the paſtern-bone by nerves combin'd,
The well-horn'd foot indiſſolubly join'd
Which whizzing high the wall unſeemly ſign'd.
The chief, indignant, grins a ghaſtly ſmile;
Revenge and ſcorn within his boſom boil:

v. 370. —— *Grins a ghaſtly ſmile.*] The expreſſion in Greek is remarkable:

When thus the prince with pious rage inflam'd:
Had not th' inglorious wound thy malice aim'd

———μειδησε δε θυμῳ
Σαρδάνιον (or Σαρδόνιον)

Some tell us that there is an herb frequent in the iſland of Sardinia, which by taſting diſtorts the muſcles, that a man ſeems to laugh while he is under a painful agony: and from hence the Sardinian laugh became a proverb, to ſignify a laugh which concealed an inward pain. Others refer the expreſſion to an antient cuſtom of the Sardinians (a colony of the Lacedæmonians); it is pretended that upon a certain feſtival every year, they not only ſlew all their priſoners of war, but alſo all the old men that were above ſeventy, and obliged theſe miſerable wretches to laugh while they underwent the ſeverity of torment. Either of theſe reaſons fully explains the meaning of the Σαρδόνιος γέλως; and ſhews it to denote an exterior laugh, and an inward pain. I am inclined to prefer the former interpretation, not only as it appears moſt natural, but becauſe Virgil ſeems to underſtand it in that ſenſe, for he alludes to the above mentioned quality of the Sardinian herbs, Eclogue 7. v. 41.

Immo ego Sardois videor tibi amarior herbis.

———deform'd like him who chaws
Sardinian herbage to contract his jaws.

The reader may obſerve that Cteſippus breaks out into buffoonry, and the ſuitors are frequently guilty of it in other parts of the Odyſſey: theſe levities have been proſcribed by the critics as too low, and unworthy of epic poetry: but Homer adapts himſelf to his characters, he paints ridiculous men in ridiculous colours; though I will not ſay but ſuch characters are more proper for comedy than epic poetry. If ever they are pardonable, they are in Homer, who puts theſe low pleaſantries into the mouths of drunkards and debauchees; ſuch perſons being generally men of no worth or ſerious deportment.

Fall'n guiltleſs of the mark, my certain ſpear
Had made thee buy the brutal triumph dear:
Nor ſhou'd thy ſire a queen his daughter boaſt,
The ſuitor now had vaniſh'd in a ghoſt:
No more, ye lewd compeers, with lawleſs pow'r
Invade my dome, my herds and flocks devour:
For genuine worth, of age mature to know,
My grape ſhall redden, and my harveſt grow.
Or if each other's wrongs ye ſtill ſupport,
With rapes and riot to prophane my court;
What ſingle arm with numbers can contend?
On me let all your lifted ſwords deſcend,
And with my life ſuch vile diſhonours end.

A long ceſſation of diſcourſe enſu'd,
By gentler Agelaus thus renew'd.

A juſt reproof, ye peers! your rage reſtrain
From the protected gueſt, and menial train:
And prince! to ſtop the ſource of future ill,
Aſſent yourſelf, and gain the royal will.
Whilſt hope prevail'd to ſee your ſire reſtor'd,
Of right the queen refus'd a ſecond lord:
But who ſo vain of faith, ſo blind to fate,
To think he ſtill ſurvives to claim the ſtate?
Now preſs the ſovereign dame with warm deſire
To wed, as wealth or worth her choice inſpire:
The lord, ſelected to the nuptial joys,
Far hence will lead the long contended prize:
Whilſt in paternal pomp, with plenty bleſt,
You reign, of this imperial dome poſſeſt.

Sage and ſerene Telemachus replies;
By him at whoſe beheſt the thunder flies!
And by the name on earth I moſt revere,
By great Ulyſſes, and his woes I ſwear!
(Who never muſt review his dear domain;
Inroll'd, perhaps, in Pluto's dreary train,)
Whene'er her choice the royal dame avows,
My bridal gifts ſhall load the future ſpouſe:
But from this dome my parent-queen to chaſe!——
From me, ye gods! avert ſuch dire diſgrace.
But Pallas clouds with intellectual gloom
The ſuitors ſouls, inſenſate of their doom!
A mirthful phrenzy ſeiz'd the fated croud;
The roofs reſound with cauſeleſs laughter loud.

v. 403. *Sage and ſerene Telemachus replies*, etc.] It is obſervable that Telemachus ſwears by the *ſorrows* of his father; an expreſſion in my judgment, very noble, and at the ſame time full of filial tenderneſs. This was an antient cuſtom among the Orientals, as appears from an oath not unlike it in Geneſis xxxi. 53. *And Jacob ſware by the* fear *of his father Iſaac.*

But how is this ſpeech to be underſtood? for how can Telemachus perſuade his mother to marry, when he knows that Ulyſſes is returned? There is a concealed and an apparent meaning in the expreſſion. Telemachus, obſerves Euſtathius, ſwears that he will not hinder his mother from taking an huſband, but he means Ulyſſes: the words therefore are ambiguous, and the ambiguity deceives the ſuitors, who believe that by this oath Telemachus obliges himſelf not only not to hinder, but promote the intended nuptials.

415. *A mirthful phrenzy ſeiz'd*, etc.] It is in the Greek, *They laughed with other mens cheeks.* There are

Floating in gore, portentous to ſurvey!
In each diſcolour'd vaſe the viands lay:

many explications of this paſſage: Euſtathius imagines it to denote a feigned and pretended laughter. Eraſmus explains it *non libentur neque ex animo ridere, ſed ita ridere quaſi non tuis, ſed alienis maxillis rideas.* But if we conſult the conduct of the ſuitors, a contrary interpretation will ſeem to be neceſſary: for this laughter of the ſuitors appears to be very real, and from the heart. Homer calls it ἄσβεστον, *exceſſive, inextinguished;* and again, ἡδὺ γέλασσαν, or they laughed *with joy, ſuaviter riſerunt;* which expreſſions denote a real and unfeigned laughter. But how will the words be brought to bear this conſtruction? Very naturally: They laughed as if they had borrowed their cheeks, as if their cheeks were not their own, and conſequently they were not afraid to uſe them with licence and exceſs; (ſuch perſons as the ſuitors having no regard for any thing that belongs to another.)

Horace makes uſe of the ſame expreſſion,

Cum rapies in jus, malis ridentem alienis.

And likewiſe Valerius:

Errantesque genæ, atque alieno gaudia vultu.

This is the opinion of Dacier: but there are ſome lines in the Greek that make it doubtful! for immediately after the expreſſion of laughing with other mens cheeks, Homer adds, that their eyes *flowed with tears,* and *ſorrow ſeized their ſouls.* It is true, Homer deſcribes the ſuitors under an alienation of mind, and a ſudden diſtraction occaſioned by Minerva; and from hence we may gather the reaſon why they are toſt by ſo ſudden a tranſition to contrary paſſions, from laughter to tears; this moment they laugh extravagantly, and the next they weep with equal exceſs: perſons in ſuch a condition being liable to ſuch viciſſitudes.

Then down each cheek the tears ſpontaneous flow,
And ſudden ſighs precede approaching woe. 420

v 417. *Floating in gore, protentous to ſurvey!*
In each diſcolour'd vaſe the viands lay!]

This is to be looked upon as a prodigy, the belief of which was eſtabliſhed in the old world, and conſequently, whether true or falſe may be allowed to have a place in poetry. See Book XII. Annot. 32.

In the following ſpeech of Theoclymenus there is a beautiful enthuſiaſm of poetry; but how are we to underſtand that Theoclymenus ſees theſe wonders, when they are inviſible to all the ſuitors? Theoclymenus was a prophet, and ſpeaks of things future as preſent; it is the eye of the prophet that ſees theſe events, and the language of prophecy that ſpeaks of them as preſent. Thus when he ſays he ſees the palace red with blood, and thronged with ghoſts; he anticipates the event, which is verified in the approaching death of the ſuitors.

Euſtathius is of opinion, that by the laſt words of this ſpeech Theoclymenus intends to expreſs an eclipſe of the ſun; this being the day of the new moon, when eclipſes happen. Others underſtand by it the death of the ſuitors, as when we ſay the ſun is for ever gone down upon the dead: Theocritus uſes that expreſſion, Θνήσκοντι πάντα δεδυκέτ' ἠέλιον. Homer means by it, that the ſuitors ſhall never more behold the light of the ſun.

————ἠέλιος δὲ
Οὐρανὸν' ἐξαπόλωλε————

So far Euſtathius. It may be added that the Roman poets uſed the ſame expreſſion in this latter ſignification. Thus Catullus,

Nobis, quum ſemel occidit brevis lux,
Nox eſt perpetua una dormienda.

Either of theſe expoſitions make the paſſage intelligible.

In viſion rap'd, the * Hypereſian ſeer
Up-roſe, and thus divin'd the vengeance near.
O race to death devote! with Stygian ſhade
Each deſtin'd peer impending fates invade:
With tears your wan diſtorted cheeks are drown'd;
With ſanguine drops the walls are rubied round:
Thick ſwarms the ſpacious hall with howling ghoſts,
To people Orcus, and the burning coaſts!
Nor gives the ſun his golden orb to roll,
But univerſal night uſurps the pole!
Yet warn'd in vain, with laughter loud elate
The peers reproach the ſure divine of fate;
And thus Eurymachus: The dotard's mind
To ev'ry ſenſe is loſt, to reaſon blind:
Swift from the dome conduct the ſlave away;
Let him in open air behold the day.

v. 436. *Let him in open air behold the day.*] The ſuitors taking the prediction of Theoclymenus literally, viz. *I ſee you all involv'd in darkneſs*, think him diſtracted, not conceiving his words to be a prophecy; and therefore by way of deriſion command him to be carried into a place of public reſort, that he may convince himſelf it is full day. Euſtathius imagines, they intended to reproach him with drunkenneſs, becauſe it makes all objects appear indiſtinct and different from the reality: he quotes a pleaſant expreſſion of Anacharſis to this purpoſe: a certain perſon telling him at an entertainment that he had married a very ugly woman; "I think ſo too, "(replies Anacharſis) but fill me a bumper, that I may "make her a beauty."

* Theoclymenus.

Tax not (the heav'n-illumin'd ſeer rejoin'd)
Of rage, or folly, my prophetic mind;
No clouds of error dim th' ethereal rays,
Her equal pow'r each faithful ſenſe obeys.
Unguided hence my trembling ſteps I bend,
Far hence, before yon' hov'ring deaths deſcend;
Leſt the ripe harveſt of revenge begun,
I ſhare the doom ye ſuitors cannot ſhun.
This ſaid, to ſage Piræus ſped the ſeer,
His honour'd hoſt, a welcome inmate there.
O'er the protracted feaſt the ſuitors ſit,
And aim to wound the prince with pointleſs wit:
Cries one, with ſcornful leer and mimic voice,
Thy charity we praiſe, but not thy choice;
Why ſuch profuſion of indulgence ſhown
To this poor, tim'rous, toil-deteſting drone?
That other feeds on planetary ſchemes,
And pays his hoſt with hideous noon day dreams.
But, prince! for once at leaſt believe a friend,
To ſome Sicilian mart theſe courtiers ſend,

v. 437. *Tax not (the heav'n illumin'd ſeer rejoin'd)* etc.] Euſtathius explains the anſwer of Theoclymenus to be both pleaſant and ſerious: "I have *eyes*, and therefore have no occaſion for a guide to lead me from the palace; I have *ears*, and therefore hear that my abſence is deſired; I have both my *feet*, and therefore am able to go away without giving others the trouble to aſſiſt me; and I have an *underſtanding* well informed, by which I ſee the evil that threatens the ſuitors, and haſte away to avoid it."

v. 456. *To ſome Sicilian mart theſe courtiers ſend.*]

Where, if they yield their freight acroſs the main,
Dear ſell the ſlaves! demand no greater gain.

Thus jovial they; but nought the prince replies;
Full on his ſire he rowl'd his ardent eyes: 460

It is evident from this paſſage that the name of Sicily is very antient, and Euſtathius makes the following remark upon it: that the reaſon why the poet never mentions this word in deſcribing the wandrings of Ulyſſes which happened chiefly near Sicily, is to make his poetry more ſurprizing and marvellous; and that the more to countenance thoſe fabulous relations and miracles which he has told the Phæacians, he chuſes to ſpeak of it by names leſs known, and leſs familiar to his readers. Dacier obſerves from Bochart, that this iſland received the name of Sicily from the Phœnicians, before the birth of Homer, or the war of Troy: Siculi in their language ſignifies *perfection*; they called it the *iſle of perfection*, becauſe it held the chief rank amongſt all the iſlands in the Mediterranean: "It is the largeſt and beſt iſland in all our ſeas," ſays Strabo. It has likewiſe been thought to have taken its name from the Syrian language, namely from Segol, or Segul, a raiſin. For long before the vine was known in Africk, Sicily was famous for its vineyards, and from thence the Carthaginians imported their raiſins and vines. Homer celebrates this iſland for its vines in the 9th Odyſſey.

Spontaneous wines from weighty cluſters pour,
And Jove deſcends in each prolific ſhow'r.

It is likewiſe probable from this paſſage, that the Sicilians traded in ſlaves; for their lands were fertile, and they merchandized for them to manure the ground. I ſhould rather think that they were remarkable for their barbarity to their ſlaves; the ſuitors ſpeaking by way of terror to intimidate Theoclymenus; and the expreſſion ſeems to bear the ſame import with that concerning Echetus, we will 'ſend him to Echetus, or the Sicilians, who will "uſe him with the utmoſt cruelty."

Impatient ſtrait to fleſh his virgin ſword,
From the wiſe chief he waits the deathful word.
Nigh in her bright alcove, the penſive queen
To ſee the circle ſat, of all unſeen.
Sated at length they riſe, and bid prepare
An eve repaſt, with equal coſt and care:
But vengeful Pallas with preventing ſpeed
A feaſt proportion'd to their crimes decreed;
A feaſt of death! the feaſter's doom'd to bleed!

v. 463. *Nigh in her bright alcove, the penſive queen.*] The word in the original is διφρος, and ſignifies a large ſeat that would hold two perſons, from δις φερειν.

This circumſtance (obſerves Euſtathius) is not inſerted in vain: the poet deſcribes Penelope thus ſeated, that ſhe might ſee and hear the actions and deſigns of the ſuitors, in order to form her conduct according to the occaſion: now for inſtance, ſhe perceives their inſolence riſen to ſuch an height, that ſhe dares make no further delay, but immediately proclaims herſelf the prize of the beſt archer: and this naturally connects the ſtory with the next book.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XXI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The bending of Ulyſſes's bow.

Penelope, to put an end to the ſollicitation of the ſuitors, propoſes to marry the perſon who ſhould firſt bend the bow of Ulyſſes, and ſhoot through the ringlets. After their attempts have proved ineffectual, Ulyſſes, taking Eumæus and Philœtius apart, diſcovers himſelf to them: then returning, deſires leave to try his ſtrength at the bow, which, though refuſed with indignation by the ſuitors, Penelope and Telemachus cauſe it to be delivered to his hands. He bends it immediately, and ſhoots through all the rings. Jupiter in the ſame inſtant thunders from heaven; Ulyſſes accepts the omen, and gives a ſign to Telemachus, who ſtands ready armed at his ſide.

AND Pallas now, to raiſe the rivals fires,
With her own art Penelope inſpires:
Who now can bend Ulyſſes bow, and wing
The well-aim'd arrow thro' the diſtant ring,

This book is entitled Τοξου Δοσις, or the *propoſition of the bow:* this action of Penelope has given occaſion of raillery both to modern and antient critics; they inſinuate that ſhe propoſed this exerciſe of the bow to try the ſtrength of her gallants, determining to have regard to that ſingle qualification in the choice of her huſband.

Penelope vires juvenum tentabat in arcu,
Qui latus argueret, corneus arcus erat.

Shall end the ſtrife, and win th' imperial dame; 5
But diſcord and black death await the game!
The prudent queen the lofty ſtair aſcends,
At diſtance due a virgin train attends;

They interpret νευρὴν ἐντάνυσαι into a ſenſe very contrary to the character of Penelope. It is true, other authors have directly charged her with unchaſtity, and affirm that ſhe had a ſon named Pan, becauſe *all* the ſuitors had a ſhare in him. Lycophron calls her.

Βασσάραν σεμνῶς κασσωρεύουσαν.

It is the exerciſe of the bow that has occaſioned theſe imputations; for none of Homer's commentators have given the reaſon why ſhe propoſes that exerciſe in particular; and therefore ſeeing no reaſon for it, they have invented a falſe one, and give the ſtory a ridiculous air: I flatter myſelf that a better ſolution may be found out, and a reaſon given why Penelope propoſes this exerciſe in particular, and preferable to any other.

We are to remember that this day was ſacred to Apollo; this is evident from the preceding book, where the Ithacans offer an hecatomb in a grove conſecrated to that deity; the diverſion ſuits the day, the exerciſe of the bow being proper to be practiſed on the feſtival of that deity, who is the patron of it. Several of the titles of Apollo are derived from it; Ἑκάεργος, Ἑκατηβόλος, Ἀργυρότοξος. It is ſtrange that this neceſſary obſervation ſhould eſcape the notice of all commentators.

If any thing further were wanting to reconcile us to the conduct of Penelope in propoſing the bow, an inſtance almoſt parallel to it might be produced from hiſtory When Cambyſes was preparing to make war againſt Æthiopia, the king of that country bent his great bow with two fingers in the preſence of the Perſian ambaſſadors, and unbending it again, delivered it to them with theſe words; that when the Perſians could do the like, they might hope

A brazen key ſhe held, the handle turn'd,
With ſteel and poliſh'd elephant adorn'd:
Swift to the inmoſt room ſhe bent her way,
Where ſafe repos'd the royal treaſures lay;

to conquer the Æthiopians. There is nothing more abſurd in the delivery of the bow to the ſuitors by Penelope, than in the ſame act of the Æthiopian king to the Perſian ambaſſadors.

v. 9. *A brazen key ſhe held*, etc.] The numerous particularities and digreſſive hiſtories crouded together in the beginning of this book have not eſcaped cenſure. The poet very circumſtantially deſcribes the key, and the make of it, as likewiſe the bow and quiver, then tells us who gave it to Ulyſſes; at the mention of the donor's name he ſtarts into a little hiſtory of him, and returns not in many lines to his ſubject; he then no leſs circumſtantially deſcribes the chamber, and the frame of the door, he deſcends to every particular of Penelope's opening it, and every ſtep and motion ſhe takes till ſhe produces the bow before the ſuitors. This conduct has been liable to objection, as made up of particulars of ſmall importance, to no propoſed end. But notwithſtanding, every circumſtance is not without its effect and beauty, and nothing better ſhews the power of the poet's diction. So great a critic as Vida admired this very paſſage. *Poetic. lib.* 2.

Ipſa procos etiam ut juſſit certare ſagittis
Penelope, optatas promittens callida tædas
Victori, per quanta moræ diſpendia mentes
Suſpenſas trahit, ante viri quam proferet arcum!

The poet adapts his verſe to the nature of his ſubject; the deſcription loiters, to expreſs the ſtudied delay of Penelope, and her unwillingneſs to bring affairs to a deciſion. However I will not promiſe that theſe digreſſions and antient hiſtories will pleaſe every reader; the paſſage is ſo far from being faulty, that it is really an inſtance of Ho-

There ſhone high heap'd the labour'd braſs and ore,
And there the bow which great Ulyſſes bore,
And there the quiver, where now guiltleſs ſlept
Thoſe winged deaths that many a matron wept.

This gift, long ſince when Sparta's ſhores he trod,
To young Ulyſſes Iphitus beſtow'd:
Beneath Orſilochus his roof they meet;
One loſs was private, one a public debt:
Meſſena's ſtate from Ithaca detains
Three hundred ſheep, and all the ſhepherd ſwains:

mer's judgment; yet every thing that is not a fault, is not a beauty. The caſe is, Penelope propoſes the trial of the bow, merely to protract time from the nuptials; ſhe is ſlow in producing it for the ſame reaſon; and Homer, to paint this ſlowneſs in a lively manner, lets the ſubject of the poem ſtand ſtill, and wanders out of the way, that he may not come too ſoon to the end of his journey.

v. 21. *Meſſena's ſtate*, etc.] Is has been diſputed whether Meſſene here was a city or a country; Strabo affirms it to be a country, *lib.* 8. It was a port of Laconia, under the dominion of Menelaus in the time of the war of Troy; and then (continues that author) the city named Meſſene was not built. Pauſanias is of the ſame opinion, *lib.* 4. *chap.* 1. 'Before the battle of Leuctra be'tween the Thebans and Lacedæmonians, it is my judg'ment that there was no city called Meſſene; this is evi'dent from the words of Homer.'

Τὼ δ' ἐν Μεσσήνῃ ζυμβλήτην ἀλλήλοιϊν
Οἴκῳ ἐν Ὀρτιλόχοιο.

Now Ortilochus lived in Pheræ, a city of Meſſenia, and conſequently Ulyſſes and Iphitus meeting at his palace in Meſſenia, Homer muſt mean the country, not the city. That Ortilochus lived in Pheræ, appears from the third Odyſſey.

And to the youthful prince to urge the laws,
The king and elders truſt their common cauſe.
But Iphitus, employ'd on other cares,
Search'd the wide country for his wand'ring mares,
And mules, the ſtrongeſt of the lab'ring kind;
Hapleſs to ſearch! more hapleſs ſtill to find!

Ἐς Φηρὰς δ' ἱκέσθο Διοκλῆος ποτι' δῶμα,
Υἱος Ὀρτιλόχοιο.

This Iphitus was the ſon of Eurytus mentioned in the eighth book, famous for his ſkill in archery.

Vain Eurytus! whoſe art became his crime,
Swept from the earth, he periſh'd in his prime,
Sudden th' irremeable way he trod,
Who boldly durſt deſy the bowyer God.

So that even this digreſſion is not foreign to the purpoſe: the poet largely deſcribes the bow, being to make great uſe of it in the ſequel of the Odyſſey: he ſhews it was originally in the poſſeſſion of Eurytus, the moſt famous archer in the world: nay, this very digreſſion may appear to be abſolutely neceſſary; it being requiſite to deſcribe that bow, as of no common excellence and ſtrength, which was not to be drawn by any of the ſuitors; and at the ſame time it ſets off the ſtrength of the hero of the poem, who alone is able to bend it.

v. 22. *Three hundred sheep*, etc.] It has been obſerved in a former annotation, that ſuch ravages or pyracies were not only lawful but honourable amongſt the ancients: why then is Ulyſſes here ſent to redemand the ſpoils made by the Meſſenians? Dacier anſwers, that ſuch inroads were not allowable except in open war; ſhe means between Greeks and Greeks; for they themſelves exerciſed ſuch pyracies with impunity againſt other nations.

For journeying on to Hercules at length,
The lawleſs wretch, the man of brutal ſtrength,
Deaf to heav'n's voice, the ſocial rite tranſgreſt;
And for the beauteous mares deſtroy'd his gueſt.

v. 31. *Deaf to heav'n's voice, the ſocial rite tranſgreſt.*] Homer very ſolemnly condemns this action of Hercules in ſlaying Iphitus; and ſome authors (remarks Euſtathius) defend him by ſaying, he was ſeized with madneſs, and threw Iphitus down from the top of his palace; but this is contrary to Homer, and to the ſentiment of thoſe who write that Hercules was delivered as a ſlave to Omphale, for the expiation of the murder of Iphitus.

But what chiefly wants explication is the expreſſion

——ἐδὲ τραπεζαν
Ἠδέσατ.——

That is, *he paid no reverence to his table.* The table was held ſacred by the ancients, by means of which, honour was paid to the god of friendſhip and hoſpitality: it was therefore a crime to diſhonour it by any indecent behaviour. To this purpoſe Juvenal:

Hic verbis nullus pudor, aut reverentia menſæ.

The ſtatues of the gods were raiſed upon the tables, they were conſecrated by placing on them ſalt, which was always eſteemed holy, and by offering libations to the gods from them: the table therefore is called in Plutarch φιλίων Θεῶν βωμόν, καὶ ξενίων, *the altar of the gods of friendſhip and hoſpitality*: and therefore to have eaten at the ſame table, was eſteemed an inviolable obligation of friendſhip: and τραπεζαν παραβαίνειν, to tranſgreſs againſt the table, a breach of the laws of hoſpitality, and the blackeſt of crimes. I will only add, that it was cuſtomary, upon making an alliance of hoſpitality, to give mutual tokens; thus Ulyſſes here preſents Iphitus with a ſword and ſpear;

He gave the bow; and on Ulyſſes' part
Receiv'd a pointed ſword and miſſile dart:
Of luckleſs friendſhip on a foreign ſhore
Their firſt, laſt pledges! for they met no more.
The bow, bequeath'd by this unhappy hand,
Ulyſſes bore not from his native land,
Nor in the front of battle taught to bend,
But kept, in dear memorial of his friend.

Now gently winding up the fair aſcent,
By many an eaſy ſtep, the matron went;
Then o'er the pavements glides with grace divine,
(With poliſh'd oak the level pavements ſhine)
The folding gates a dazling light diſplay'd,
With pomp of various architrave o'erlay'd.
The bolt, obedient to the ſilken ſtring,
Forſakes the ſtaple as ſhe pulls the ring;
The wards reſpondent to the key turn round;
The bars fall back; the flying valves reſound;
Loud as a bull makes hill and valley ring,
So roar'd the lock when it releas'd the ſpring.

Iphitus Ulyſſes with a bow. And the producing theſe tokens was a recognition of the covenant of hoſpitality, between the perſons themſelves, and their deſcendents in following generations.

v. 51. *Loud as a bull makes hill and valley ring.*] This deſcription preſents us with a noble image; Homer introduces it to ſhew the largeneſs and ſtrength of the door, which reſounds as it opens. This exalts a trifling circumſtance into ſublimity and dignity, and renders a common action poetical; not unlike that in the 24th of the Iliad.

She moves majestic thro' the wealthy room,
Where treasur'd garments cast a rich perfume;
There from the column where aloft it hung,
Reach'd, in its splendid case, the bow unstrung:
Across her knees she laid the well known bow,
And pensive sate, and tears began to flow.
To full satiety of grief she mourns,
Then silent, to the joyous hall returns,
To the proud suitors bears in pensive state
Th' unbended bow, and arrows wing'd with fate.
Behind, her train the polish'd coffer brings,
Which held th' alternate brass and silver rings,
Full in the portal the chaste queen appears,
And with her veil conceals the coming tears:
On either side awaits a virgin fair;
While thus the matron, with majestic air.
Say you, whom these forbidden walls inclose,
For whom my victims bleed, my vintage flows;

Wide as appears some palace-gate display'd,
So broad his pinions stretch'd their ample shade.

v. 57. *Across her knees she laid the well-known bow,*
And pensive sate, and tears began to flow.]
The bow recalls to her mind the thought of her husband, and this raises her sorrows. The least trifle that once belonged to a beloved person, is sufficient to cast a cloud over the soul, which naturally falls in a shower of tears: and no doubt the exercise which the suitors are to practise with the bow, upon which her future fate depends, aggravates her sorrows; she weeps not only for the loss of Ulysses, but at the thought that she is ready to enter upon second nuptials, contrary to her inclinations.

If these neglected, faded charms can move?
Or is it but a vain pretence, you love?
If I the prize, if me you seek to wife,
Hear the conditions, and commence the strife.
Who first Ulysses' wond'rous bow shall bend,
And thro' twelve ringlets the fleet arrow send,
Him will I follow, and forsake my home,
For him forsake this lov'd, this wealthy dome,
Long, long the scene of all my past delight,
And still to last, the vision of my night!
Graceful she said, and bade Eumæus show
The rival peers the ringlets and the bow.
From his full eyes the tears unbidden spring,
Touch'd at the dear memorials of his king.
Philætius too relents, but secret shed
The tender drops. Antinous saw, and said.
Hence to your fields, ye rustics! hence away,
Nor stain with grief the pleasures of the day;
Nor to the royal heart recall in vain
The sad remembrance of a perish'd man.
Enough her precious tears already flow——
Or share the feast with due respect, or go
To weep abroad, and leave to us the bow:
No vulgar task! Ill suits this courtly crew
That stubborn horn which brave Ulysses drew.
I well remember (for I gaz'd him o'er
While yet a child) what majesty he bore!
And still (all infant as I was) retain
The port, the strength, the grandeur of the man!

He said, but in his soul fond joys arise,
And his proud hopes already win the prize.
To speed the flying shaft thro' every ring,
Wretch! is not thine: the arrows of the king
Shall end those hopes, and fate is on the wing!
Then thus Telemachus. Some god I find
With pleasing phrenzy has possess'd my mind;
When a lov'd mother threatens to depart,
Why with this ill-tim'd gladness leaps my heart?

v. 105. *Then thus Telemachus. Some god I find*, etc.] This speech is not without greater obscurity than is usual in so clear a writer as Homer. M. Dacier has done it justice, and clearly opened the sense of it in her paraphrase. "Surely, says Telemachus, Jupiter has dis-"ordererd my understanding: I see my mother, wise as "she is, preparing to leave the palace, and enter upon "a second marriage; and yet in these melancholy cir-"cumstances, I think of nothing but diverting myself, and "being an idle spectator of this exercise of the bow: no, "no, this is not to be suffered: you (the suitors) use your "utmost efforts to rob me of Penelope, I will therefore "use mine to retain her; a woman the most excellent in "any nation. But why do I praise her? you know her "worth; use therefore no pretext to defer the trial of "the bow, that we may come to an issue; I will try the "bow with you; and if I succeed, then I will retain her "as the prize of the conquest; then she shall not be o-"blidged to second nuptials: nor will Penelope abandon "a son, who, emulating his father, is (like him) able "to bear the prize from so many antagonists."

This is the true meaning of the words of Telemachus; the diction indeed is somewhat embarassed, and the connections a little obscure; but this is done by the poet, to

Come then, ye ſuitors! and diſpute a prize
Richer than all th' Achaian ſtate ſupplies,
Than all proud Argos, or Mycæna knows,
Than all our iſles or continents encloſe:
A woman matchleſs, and almoſt divine,
Fit for the praiſe of ev'ry tongue but mine.
No more excuſes then, no more delay;
Haſte to the trial——Lo! I lead the way.
I too may try, and if this arm can wing
The feather'd arrow thro' the deſtin'd ring,
Then if no happier knight the conqueſt boaſt,
I ſhall not ſorrow for a mother loſt;
But bleſt in her, poſſeſs theſe arms alone,
Heir of my father's ſtrength, as well as throne.
He ſpoke; then riſing, his broad ſword unbound,
And caſt his purple garment on the ground.
A trench he open'd; in a line he plac'd
The level axes, and the points made faſt.
(His perfect ſkill the wond'ring gazers ey'd,
The game as yet unſeen, as yet untry'd.)
Then, with a manly pace, he took his ſtand;
And graſp'd the bow, and twang'd it in his hand.
Three times, with beating heart, he made eſſay;
Three times, unequal to the taſk, gave way;

expreſs the diſorder and hurry of mind in Telemachus, who fears for the fate of Penelope: therefore the connection of the periods is interrupted, to repreſent Telemachus ſtarting thro' eagerneſs of ſpirit from thought to thought, without order or regularity.

A modeſt boldneſs on his cheek appear'd,
And thrice he hop'd, and thrice again he fear'd.
The fourth had drawn it. The great fire with joy
Beheld, but with a ſign forbade the boy.
His ardour ſtrait th' obedient prince ſuppreſt,
And artful, thus the ſuitor-train addreſt.

v. 135. *The fourth had drawn it. The great fire with joy*
Beheld, but with a ſign forbade———]

It is not apparent at the firſt view why Ulyſſes prohibits Telemachus from drawing the bow; but Euſtathius gives ſufficient reaſon for this conduct: it would have defeated his whole deſign, and rendered the death of the ſuitors impracticable; for Telemachus had declared that he would retain Penelope, if he ſucceeded in the exerciſe of the bow; and this of neceſſity would create an immediate conteſt between that hero and the ſuitors, and bring matters unſeaſonably to extremity. The ſame author aſſigns a ſecond reaſon; Ulyſſes fears leſt Telemachus by bending the bow ſhould make it more ſupple and flexible, and therefore commands him to deſiſt, leſt it ſhould be drawn by the ſuitors; beſides if he had drawn it, it would have raiſed an emulation amongſt them, and they would have applied the utmoſt of their abilities not to be outdone by ſo young a perſon as Telemachus; but his deſpair to effect it, makes them leſs ſollicitous, the trial being equally unſucceſsful to them all.

It may alſo be obſerved that there is a very happy addreſs made to Telemachus by Homer; he ſhews us that he could have drawn it, but deſiſts in obedience to Ulyſſes: thus the poet has found out a way to give Telemachus the honour of the victory without obtaining it; and at the ſame time ſhews the ſuperior wiſdom of Ulyſſes, who reſtrains his ſon in the heat of his attempt; and makes him by a happy preſence of mind at once foreſee the danger, and prevent it.

Oh lay the cauſe on youth yet immature!
(For heav'n forbid, ſuch weakneſs ſhould endure)
How ſhall this arm, unequal to the bow,
Retort an inſult, or repel a foe?
But you! whom heav'n with better nerves has bleſt,
Accept the trial, and the prize conteſt.
He caſt the bow before him, and apart
Againſt the poliſh'd quiver propt the dart.
Reſuming then his ſeat, Epitheus' ſon
The bold Antinous to the reſt begun.
" From where the goblet firſt begins to flow,
" From right to left in order take the bow;

v. 149. *From where the goblet firſt begins to flow*
From right to left, etc.]

Antinous makes this propoſition, that every perſon may try his ſkill without confuſion. Perhaps it is propoſed by Antinous by way of omen, the right hand being reckoned fortunate: but however that be, it is very evident that in the entertainments of the ancients the cup was delivered towards the right hand: hence δεξίωσις came to ſignify to drink towards the right hand, and Athenæus thus interprets this paſſage in the firſt of the Iliad.

——χρυσείοις δεπάεσσι
Δεξιδέχατ' ἀλλήλους ——

Which, remarks that author, ſignifies ἐδεξιοῦντο προτείνοντες ἑαυτοῖς ταῖς δεξιαῖς. And there is expreſs mention made of this practice, *lib.* 1. *ver.* 597. of the Iliad.

——θεοῖς ἐνδέξια πᾶσιν
Οἰνοχοεῖ——

That is, *beginning from the right hand*, as the ſcholiaſt rightly interprets it, *Vulcan delivered the bowl to all the gods.*

" And prove your several strengths"--The princes heard,
And first Leiodes, blameless priest, appear'd;
The eldest born of Oenop's noble race,
Who next the goblet held his holy place:
He, only he of all the suitor-throng,
Their deeds detested, and abjur'd the wrong.
With tender hands the stubborn horn he strains,
The stubborn horn resisted all his pains!

This observation explains various passages in many antient authors, as well as in the Iliad and Odyssey: the custom indeed is not of any great importance, but it is at least a curiosity, and valuable because antient. I doubt not but the bowl, out of which these persons drank, would by antiquaries be thought ineſtimable; and the possession of an antient bowl is not quite so valuable as the knowledge of an antient custom.

v. 152.——— *Leiodes, blameless priest.*] The word in the original is θυοσκόος, a person who makes predictions from victims or from the smoke of the sacrifice. This Leiodes, the poet tells us, sate next to the bowl; the reason of it, saith Eustathius, was because the suitors feared lest poison should be mixed in it, and they thought themselves safe through his care and inspection: but it may perhaps be a better reason to say, that he sate there in discharge of his office as a prophet, to make libations to the gods; as was customary at the beginning and end of all entertainments.

The poet adds that this prophet was placed at the extremity of the apartment; the reason may be because he was an enemy to the insolence of the suitors, and therefore withdrew from their conversation; or perhaps the word is inserted only to shew that his place was the first (for Eustathius explains μυχοίτατος by πρῶτος and ἐνδότατος) and therefore he was the most proper person to begin the experiment, that the rest might make trial ac-

Already in despair he gives it o'er;
Take it who will, he cries, I strive no more.
What num'rous deaths attend this fatal bow!
What souls and spirits shall it send below!

cording as they were seated, successively; and what makes this the more probable is that the propination always began from the most honourable person.

v. 161. *What num'rous deaths attend this fatal bow! What souls, and spirits*, etc.]

There is in these words a full and clear prediction of the destruction of the suitors by the bow of Ulysses; but what follows, when the prophet comes to explain himself, renders it ambiguous, *Better indeed to die*, etc. The next line is very remarkable for the distinction it makes between θημος and ψυχη, *soul* and *spirit*: the reader may turn to the note on *lib.* 23. *ver.* 92, 122. of the Iliad; and that on *lib.* 11. *ver.* 743. of the Odyssey, where an account is given of the notion of the ancients concerning this division. I shall only here add a passage in St. Paul to the Hebrews, which did not then occur to me, that remarkably falls in with it. *The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of* soul *and* spirit. *Heb.* iv. 12.

This Leiodes falls by the sword of Ulysses in the next book; but is it not injustice to take away the life of a person who is here described as a man of virtue, detesting the actions of the suitors, and dignified with prophecy? It is easy to answer this objection; he is one of the suitors to Penelope, as appears from his trying the bow amongst the rest of them, in order to obtain her in marriage, and consequently he is involved in the general crime: this distinguishes his case from that of Medon and Phemius, whom Ulysses spares, it appearing that they made no pretensions to the bed of Penelope, whereas Leiodes endeavours to marry the queen, which single act would

Better indeed to die, and fairly give
Nature her debt, than disappointed live,
With each new sun to some new hope a prey,
Yet still to-morrow falser than to-day.
How long in vain Penelope we sought?
This bow shall ease us of that idle thought,
And send us with some humbler wife to live,
Whom gold shall gain, or destiny shall give.
Thus speaking on the floor the bow he plac'd,
(With rich inlay the various floor was grac'd)
At distance far the feather'd shaft he throws,
And to the seat returns from whence he rose.
To him Antinous thus with fury said,
What words ill-omen'd from thy lips have fled?
Thy coward function ever is in fear;
Those arms are dreadful which thou canst not bear.
Why should this bow be fatal to the brave?
Because the priest is born a peaceful slave.
Mark then what others can——he ended there,
And bade Melanthius a vast pyle prepare;
He gives it instant flame: then fast beside
Spreads o'er an ample board a bullock's hide.
With melted lard they soak the weapon o'er,
Chafe ev'ry knot, and supple ev'ry pore.

exclude Ulysses from his own bed and dominions. Besides, if we would escape the punishment of wicked men, we must not only detest their crimes, but conversation.

v. 186. *Chafe ev'ry knot, and supple ev'ry pore.*] This passage has been egregiously misunderstood, and it has been imagined that this unguent is to anoint the limbs of

Vain all their art, and all their ſtrength as vain;
The bow inflexible reſiſts their pain.
The force of great Eurymachus alone
And bold Antinous, yet untry'd, unknown:
Thoſe only now remain'd; but thoſe confeſt
Of all the train the mightieſt and the beſt.

Then from the hall, and from the noiſy crew,
The maſters of the herd and flock withdrew.

the ſuitors to make them more ſupple, after the manner of the wreſtlers who obſerved that cuſtom; but it is very evident that τόξον is to be underſtood in the Greek, and that it is the bow, not the limbs of the ſuitors, that is to be anointed. Euſtathius thus fully explains it; the lard is brought to make the bow pliant, they chafe it before the fire, that the particles of it may enter the pores of the bow and render it flexible. But Euſtathius falls into an error about the ſeat that is brought by Melanthius: he imagines the ſuitors ſate while they drew the bow, that they might be upon a level with the ringlets which were fixed upon the ground; whereas in reality the ſeat is brought, that they may ſit while they chafe the bow. Homer himſelf ſays, when Leiodes endeavours to draw it, that he ſtood up, ἀνίστατο, and again,

He ſtood, and ſtepping forward try'd the bow.

Στῆ δ' ἀρ' ἐπ' ἤδὸν ἰὼν, καὶ τόξα πειρήτιζεν.

But how is this to be reconciled with the conduct of Ulyſſes, who is directly affirmed to ſit while he draws it?

——εἵλκεν νευρὴν γλυφίδας τε
Ἀυτόθεν ἐκ δίφροιο καθήμενος——

That circumſtance is inſerted to ſhew the great ſtrength and dexterity of Ulyſſes, who is able to draw it in that diſadvantageous poſture: the poet in every incident maintains his ſuperiority.

The king obſerves them: he the hall forſakes,
And, paſt the limits of the court o'ertakes.
Then thus with accent mild Ulyſſes ſpoke:
Ye faithful guardians of the herd and flock!
Shall I the ſecret of my breaſt conceal,
Or (as my ſoul now dictates) ſhall I tell?

v. 193. *Then from the hall, and from the noiſy crew,*
The maſters of the herd and flock withdrew.] It is wonderful how exactly the poet obſerves the diſtribution of time; he diſtinctly marks the action of every day, and allots a proper ſpace to every action. In this place the poem goes forward while Ulyſſes withdraws to engage the aſſiſtance of Philætius and Eumæus. The ſuitors are amuſed and employed about the bow, while Ulyſſes ſteals away from their obſervation, and returns without raiſing their jealouſy. The poet likewiſe manages the time of the diſcovery of Ulyſſes very judiciouſly; though he knew the fidelity of Eumæus and Philætius, yet he truſts them not with the knowledge of his perſon, till the very hour of execution; agreeable to the general character of his cautious nature and profound ſecrecy. But then is not this an imputation to Penelope, that he ſhould chuſe to diſcover himſelf to theſe two perſons, rather than to his queen? The anſwer is, there was a neceſſity for his diſcovery to the former, but none to the latter; he wants their aſſiſtance in the future engagement, and makes good uſe of it; whereas a diſcovery made to the queen could have been of no advantage, and might poſſibly have proved detrimental; beſides, this is a ſeaſon that requires expedition; and we find Ulyſſes complies with it; and is very conciſe in the diſcovery and interview with Philætius and Eumæus. The poet therefore reſerves the diſcovery of Ulyſſes to Penelope to a time of more leiſure, that he may dwell upon it more largely, and beautify his poem with ſo eſſential an ornament with greater ſolemnity.

Say, ſhould ſome fav'ring god reſtore again
The loſt Ulyſſes to his native reign;
How beat your hearts? what aid would you afford?
To the proud ſuitors, or your antient lord?
Philætius thus. Oh were thy word not vain!
Would mighty Jove reſtore that man again!
Theſe aged ſinews with new vigour ſtrung
In his bleſt cauſe ſhould emulate the young:
With equal vows Eumæus too implor'd
Each pow'r above, with wiſhes for his lord.
He ſaw their ſecret ſouls, and thus began.
Thoſe vows the gods accord: behold the man!
Your own Ulyſſes! twice ten years detain'd
By woes and wand'rings from this hapleſs land:
At length he comes; but comes deſpis'd, unknown,
And finding faithful, you, and you alone.
All elſe have caſt him from their very thought,
Ev'n in their wiſhes, and their pray'rs, forgot!
Hear then, my friends! if Jove this arm ſucceed,
And give yon' impious revellers to bleed,
My care ſhall be, to bleſs your future lives
With large poſſeſſions, and with faithful wives;
Faſt by my palace ſhall your domes aſcend,
And each on young Telemachus attend,
And each be call'd his brother, and my friend.
To give you firmer faith, now truſt your eye:
Lo! the broad ſcar indented on my thigh,
When with Autolycus's ſons, of yore,
On Parnaſs' top I chac'd the tuſky boar.

His ragged veſt then drawn aſide diſclos'd
The ſign conſpicuous, and the ſcar expos'd:

v. 231. ——*and the ſcar expos'd.*] Ariſtotle treating of the different ſort of Remembrances, chap. 17. of his Poetics, divides them into two kinds, *natural* or *adventitious*; the former ſort is ſimple and without art, which poets uſe for want of invention; as for inſtance, when they bring about the diſcovery of a perſon by ſome natural mark or token upon the body: the latter are either marks upon the body, or ſcars occaſioned by ſome accident, or tokens diſtinct from the body, ſuch as the caſket, *etc.* which Plautus and Terence uſe in the diſcovery of ſeveral perſons in their comedies: of this latter kind is this ſcar of Ulyſſes; it is an adventitious remembrance, and theſe remembrances (continues Ariſtotle) may be uſed with more or leſs art; thus in the caſe of this wound of Ulyſſes, it is uſed by Homer in a different way: Euryclea, lib. 19. deſcries it accidentally; Ulyſſes here ſhews it to Eumæus and Philætius voluntarily; and it is certain that all thoſe marks, which a poet deſignedly and deliberately uſes to eſtabliſh any verity, have leſs ingenuity than thoſe which produce their effects undeſignedly and caſually, and conſequently the remembrance in the nineteenth Odyſſey is more ingenious than the ſecond diſcovery. The reaſon is, it ſhews no ingenuity to have recourſe to ſuch marks, when we have an intention to make the diſcovery: it cauſes no ſurpriſe nor variety, neither is it produced by any art or invention: on the contrary, the other in the nineteenth book ariſes from the ſubject, and not from the fancy of the poet only. But, ſays Dacier, when Ariſtotle affirms that this preſent remembrance wants ingenuity, we are not yet to imagine that he condemns it; for it is a remembrance made by neceſſity. Ulyſſes has not opportunity to wait till the diſcovery is made accidentally, as in the nineteenth book; he is abſolutely compelled to make it deſignedly, to engage Eumæus and Philætius in his cauſe, by plainly proving to

Eager they view'd; with joy they ſtood amaz'd;
With tear-full eyes o'er all their maſter gaz'd:
Around his neck their longing arms they caſt,
His head, his ſhoulders, and his knees embrac'd:
Tears follow'd tears; no word was in their pow'r
In ſolemn ſilence fell the kindly ſhow'r.
The king too weeps, the king too graſps their hands,
And moveleſs, as a marble fountain, ſtands.
Thus had their joy wept down the ſetting ſun;
But firſt the wiſe-man ceas'd, and thus begun.
Enough——on other cares your thought imploy,
For danger waits on all untimely joy.
Full many foes, and fierce, obſerve us near:
Some may betray, and yonder walls may hear.
Re-enter then, not all at once, but ſtay
Some moments you, and let me lead the way.
To me, neglected as I am, I know
The haughty ſuitors will deny the bow;

them that he was the real Ulyſſes. If therefore that hero ſhews leſs art in the manner of the remembrance, he ſhews more wiſdom in accommodating his conduct to the opportunity, and uſing the preſent conjuncture advantageouſly, to bring about his own re-eſtabliſhment. I will only further obſerve the judgment of Homer in making this diſcovery with the utmoſt brevity, concluding it in the compaſs of two verſes: he had before enlarged upon the wound, and the reader is already fully inſtructed in the ſtory: there is likewiſe another reaſon that requires conciſeneſs; the urgency of the time demands it, for Ulyſſes and Eumæus could not be long in conference without obſervation, and raiſing the jealouſy of the ſuitors.

But thou, Eumæus, as 'tis born away,
Thy master's weapon to his hand convey.
At ev'ry portal let some matron wait,
And each lock fast the well-compacted gate:
Close let them keep, whate'er invades their ear;
Tho' arms, or shouts, or dying groans they hear.
To thy strict charge, Philœtius we consign
The court's main gate: to guard that pass be thine.
This said, he first return'd: the faithful swains
At distance follow, as their king ordains.
Before the flame Eurymachus now stands,
And turns the bow, and chafes it with his hands;
Still the tough bow unmov'd. The lofty man
Sigh'd from his mighty soul, and thus began:
I mourn the common cause; for, oh my friends!
On me, on all, what grief, what shame attends?
Not the lost nuptials can affect me more,
(For Greece has beauteous dames on ev'ry shore)

v. 252. *At ev'ry portal*, etc.] This is a very necessary injunction: Ulysses fears not only lest any of the suitors should make his escape, but also lest any of the women who were friends to the suitors should give information to their partisans abroad, and introduce them to their assistance. Eustathius.

v. 266. *Not the lost nuptials*———] No doubt but Eurymachus misrepresents his real sentiments, when he makes the loss of Penelope of little importance; but his conduct is an exact picture of human nature: when we have used our utmost endeavours to obtain our desires, and have failed in the attempt, the object immediately loses its value, and we would be thought to despise it. To be easy under any disappointment is the result of rea-

But baffled thus! confeſs'd ſo far below
Ulyſſes' ſtrength, as not to bend his bow!
How ſhall all ages our attempt deride!
Our weakneſs ſcorn? Antinous thus reply'd.

Not ſo, Eurymachus: that no man draws
The wond'rous bow, attend another cauſe.
Sacred to Phœbus is the ſolemn day,
Which thoughtleſs we in games would waſte away;

ſon; but to ſeem to deſpiſe what we have been very ſolicitous to obtain, ariſes from the pride of our natures, which perſuades us to endeavour to cheat the world into an opinion that we have not been diſappointed: the remedy for this diſeaſe of our minds, is a regular conduct, and to hold the balance even in all our affairs, that the ſcale be not raiſed too high or depreſſed too low.

v. 274. *Sacred to Phoebus is the ſolemn day.*] Antinous in this reply, ſpeaks, as well as Eurymachus, with diſſimulation; he is unwilling to give a true reaſon, and therefore invents a falſe one: the true reaſon why he defers the trial of the bow is, becauſe he fears his inability to draw it; the feigned reaſon is a pretended piety paid to the day: it was a day to be obſerved religiouſly, and he inſinuates that all ſports upon it are a prophanation of it; and conſequently, Apollo being provoked, diſables them from drawing the bow, of which he is the patron. This is the reaſon why he propoſes to offer a libation, to atone for the abuſe of the day by their diverſions. But perhaps the reaſon why Antinous defers the exerciſe of the bow to the following day, is not becauſe he thought it unlawful to proceed in it on the feſtival of Apollo; for why ſhould an exerciſe which was inſtituted in honour of that deity, be thought a prophanation of the day? I ſhould therefore rather conclude that the impiety intended by Antinous, was their omiſſion in not offering a ſacri-

'Till the next dawn this ill-tim'd ſtrife forgo,
And here leave fixt the ringlets in a row.
Now bid the few'r approach, and let us join
In due libations, and in rites divine,
So ends our night: before the day ſhall ſpring,
The choiceſt off'rings let Melanthius bring;
Let then to Phœbus' name the fatted thighs
Feed the rich ſmokes, high curling to the ſkies.
So ſhall the patron of theſe arts beſtow
(For his the gift) the ſkill to bend the bow.

They heard well-pleas'd: the ready heralds bring
The cleanſing waters from the limpid ſpring:
The goblet high with roſy wine they crown'd,
In order circling to the peers around.
That right compleat, uproſe the thoughtful man,
And thus his meditated ſcheme began.

If what I aſk your noble minds approve,
Ye peers and rivals in the royal love!
Chief, if it hurt not great Antinous' ear,
(Whoſe ſage deciſion I with wonder hear)

ſice to that god before they begun the trial, that he might proſper their endeavours: the concluſion of his ſpeech makes this opinion probable: 'Let us now defer the experiment, and offer ſacrifice in the morning to Apollo, 'that he may give us ſucceſs in drawing the bow;' which implies that they were unſucceſsful becauſe they had forgot to ſacrifice I will only add, that Antinous mentions a goat as an offering to Apollo; we have before ſeen bulls, ſheep and bullocks offered to that deity: the reaſon why a goat is a proper victim, I ſuppoſe is becauſe he is a rural god, and patron of ſhepherds, and therefore all kinds of beaſts were offered to him promiſcuouſly.

And if Eurymachus the motion pleaſe;
Give heav'n this day, and reſt the bow in peace.
To-morrow let your arms diſpute the prize,
And take it he, the favour'd of the ſkies!
But ſince till then, this trial you delay,
Truſt it one moment to my hands to-day:
Fain would I prove, before your judging eyes,
What once I was, whom wretched you deſpiſe;
If yet this arm its antient force retain;
Or if my woes (a long-continu'd train)
And wants and inſults make me leſs than man.
Rage flaſh'd in lightning from the ſuitors eyes,
Yet mix'd with terror at the bold emprize.
Antinous then: O miſerable gueſt!
Is common ſenſe quite baniſh'd from thy breaſt!
Suffic'd it not within the palace plac'd
To ſit diſtinguiſh'd, with our preſence grac'd,
Admitted here with princes to confer,
A man unknown, a needy wanderer?
To copious wine this inſolence we owe,
And much thy betters wine can overthrow:
The great Eurytion when this frenzy ſtung,
Pirithous' roofs with frantic riot rung;

v. 318. *Pirithous' roofs.* etc.] The ſtory of the Centaur is this: Pirithous a Lapithite, marrying Hippodamia the daughter of Adraſtus, invited the Centaurs and Lapithæ to his nuptials; the Centaurs drinking to great exceſs, and offering violence to the bride, engaged them in a quarrel; Eurytion was the perſon who began the diſorder, and the war that enſued became fatal to the whole nation of the Centaurs. Horace alludes to this hiſtory.

Boundleſs the Centaur rag'd; 'till one and all
The heroes roſe, and dragg'd him from the hall; 320

At nequis modici tranſiliat munera liberi,
Centaurea monet cum Lapithis rixa ſuper mero
Debellata———

The Lapithites were a people of Theſſaly inhabiting the mountains Pindus and Othrys; the Centaurs were their neighbours, and dwelt in mount Pelion. This war between the Lapithites and the Centaurs probably laſted about a year: for it began on the day of the nuptials of Pirithous, and on the day that his ſon Polypætes was born, he obtained a deciſive victory over the Centaurs, and drove them from mount Pelion. Thus lib. 2. ver. 900. of the Iliad.

Thy troops, Argiſſa, Polypætes leads
And Eleon, ſhelter'd by Olympus' ſhades;
Sprung from Pirithous of immortal race,
The fruit of fair Hippodame's embrace,
That day when hurl'd from Pelion's cloudy head
To diſtant dens the ſhaggy Centaurs fled.

The hiſtory is at large related by Ovid, Metamorph. 12. He calls Eurytion by the name of Eurytus, and deſcribes the nuptial feaſt in a cave, and not in the palace of Pirithous. Thus Mr. Dryden:

In a cool cave's receſs the treat was made,
Whoſe entrance trees with ſpreading boughs o'erſhade:
There one more brutal of the brutal brood,
Or whether wine or beauty fir'd his blood,
Or both at once; beheld with luſtful eyes
The bride, at once, reſolv'd to make his prize:
Down went the board; and faſt'ning on her hair
He ſeiz'd with ſudden force the frighted fair:
'Twas Eurytus began.———

His nose they shorten'd, and his ears they slit,
And sent him sober'd home, with better wit.
Hence with long war the double race was curst,
Fatal to all, but to th' aggressor first.
Such fate I prophesy our guest attends,
If here this interdicted bow he bends;
Nor shall these walls such insolence contain;
The first fair wind transports him o'er the main;
Where Echetus to death the guilty brings,
(The worst of mortals, ev'n the worst of kings)
Better than that, if thou approve our chear,
Cease the mad strife, and share our bounty here.
To this the queen her just dislike expresst;
'Tis impious, prince! to harm the stranger-guest,
Base to insult who bears a suppliant's name,
And some respect Telemachus may claim,
What if th' immortals on the man bestow
Sufficient strength to draw the mighty bow?
Shall I, a queen, by rival chiefs ador'd,
Accept a wand'ring stranger for my lord?
A hope so idle never touch'd his brain;
Then ease your bosoms of a fear so vain.
Far be he banish'd from this stately scene
Who wrongs his princess with a thought so mean.
O fair! and wisest of so fair a kind!
(Respectful thus Eurymachus rejoin'd)
Mov'd by no weak surmize, but sense of shame,
We dread the all arraigning voice of fame;
We dread the censure of the meanest slave,
The weakest woman: all can wrong the brave.

" Behold what wretches to the bed pretend
" Of that brave chief whose bow they could not bend!
" In came a beggar of the strolling crew,
" And did what all those princes could not do."
Thus will the common voice our deed defame,
And thus posterity upbraid our name.

To whom the queen. If fame ingage your views,
Forbear those acts which infamy pursues;
Wrong and oppression no renown can raise;
Know, friend! that virtue is the path to praise.

v. 357. ——*If fame engage your views,*
Forbear those acts which infamy pursues]
This answer of Penelope is very severe and very just: Eurymachus (observes Dacier) had said if this beggar draws the bow, we shall lose our reputation: Penelope answers, it is in vain to be solicitous about your reputation, when your lives are a series of infamous actions: fame is the reward of good, and shame the portion of base and unworthy deeds: it is no dishonour for a prince to be surpassed by a beggar in strength, but a prince is more infamous than a beggar, if his actions betray him to be a worse man; a base action sinks him into contempt and taints his nobility. The words in Homer are τί ἔλεγχος τοῦτα τιθεῖτε; which Eustathius thus explains; why do you overlook the greater dishonour and are thus afraid of trifles? and, adds Dacier, the sentiment is just and happy: these princes place disgrace where it is not; they think it a shame to yield in strength to this stranger, which is really no shame; mere strength is the praise of a beast, not of a prince: on the contrary, what is really a shame, they think to be none; they prey upon a king, who was a friend to all mankind, they act a thousand insolent and base deeds, and yet apprehend no discredit. This is an unhappy, and I wish it were an unjust, picture of human nature; we de-

The ſtature of our gueſt, his port, his face,
Speak him deſcended from no vulgar race.
To him the bow, as he deſires, convey;
And to his hand if Phœbus give the day,
Hence, to reward his merit, he ſhall bear
A two edged faulchion and a ſhining ſpear,
Embroider'd ſandals, a rich cloak and veſt,
A ſafe conveyance to his port of reſt.
O royal mother! ever honour'd name!
Permit me (cries Telemachus) to claim
A ſon's juſt right. No Grecian prince but I
Has pow'r this bow to grant, or to deny.
Of all that Ithaca's rough hills contain,
And all wide Ellis' courſer-breeding plain,
To me alone my father's arms deſcend;
And mine alone they are, to give or lend.
Retire, oh queen! thy houſhold taſk reſume,
Tend, with thy maids, the labours of the loom;

ceive ourſelves with falſe notions both of ſhame and glory, and we may apply the words of Terence to this purpoſe:

———*Hic ubi opus eſt*
Non verentur: illic ubi opus eſt ibi verentur.

Priaſe is only to be obtained by virtue, and fame is the certain reward of it: ill-nature or envy may eclipſe it, but it will prevail and break out into glory.

v. 377. *Retire, oh queen*, etc.] This ſpeech has been accuſed of too great a liberty, and as wanting in reſpect from a ſon to a mother: Telemachus ſpeaks with authority, when he ought to have ſhewed obedience and filial duty. But theſe critics miſtake the deſign and intention

The bow, the darts, and arms of chivalry,
These cares to man belong, and most to me. 380

of Telemachus; he speaks directly to Penelope, but obliquely and intentionally to the suitors: it is for this reason that he says he is supreme in the palace, viz. to let them know that he will not give up the sway into their power. He tells Penelope that the bow shall be used as he directs; this is done to intimidate the suitors, and prepare the way for the delivery of it to Ulysses, contrary to their injunctions to Eumæus.

The verses are the same with those in the 6th of the Iliad. There Hector speaks to Andromache, a tender husband to a fond wife, and the speech was never taxed with any want of love and kindness. In that place Hector remembers that he is an husband, yet forgets not that he is an heroe. In this Telemachus deviates not from the duty of a son, yet speaks in the stile and character of a prince.

Eustathius excellently enlarges upon the words of Telemachus: there is an absolute necessity that Penelope should withdraw, that she might not be present at the scene of blood and slaughter. It is for the same reason that the poet introduces Minerva casting her into a profound sleep, that she might be intirely ignorant of the death of the suitors: this is absolutely necessary; for if she had been acquainted that Ulysses was returned, and the suitors slain by his hand, there could have been no room for the interview between Ulysses and Penelope in the succeeding parts of the Odyssey.

But is not Minerva introduced upon too small an occasion, only to cast Penelope into a slumber? would not nature have worked the same effect without the assistance of the goddess? I have already remarked that machines are not always used out of necessity, but frequently for ornament, to dignify the poetry and create surprize by the appearance of a deity. But here the poet brings down Minerva, to give credibility to the story; for though it be true that nature is sufficient to produce this effect, yet that

Mature beyond his years, the queen admir'd
His ſage reply, and with her train retir'd:
There in her chamber as ſhe ſat apart,
Revolv'd his words, and plac'd them in her heart.
On her Ulyſſes then ſhe fix'd her ſoul,
Down her fair cheek the tears abundant roll,
'Till gentle Pallas, piteous of her cries,
In ſlumber clos'd his ſilver-ſtreaming eyes.
Now through the preſs the bow Eumæus bore,
And all was riot, noiſe, and wild uproar.
Hold, lawleſs ruſtic! whither wilt thou go?
To whom inſenſate, doſt thou bear the bow?
Exil'd for this to ſome ſequeſter'd den,
Far from the ſweet ſociety of men,
To thy own dogs a prey thou ſhalt be made;
If heav'n and Phœbus lend the ſuitors aid.
Thus they. Aghaſt he laid the weapon down,
But bold Telemachus thus urg'd him on.

it ſhould operate in that critical and exact moment, when the poet has occaſion for it, is in ſome degree incredible: the poet therefore to reconcile the relation to probability, introduces a præternatural ſleep, occaſioned by the immediate operation of a goddeſs.

v. 381 ——— *the queen admir'd*
His ſage reply ———]

Penelope is amazed at the free remonſtrance of Telemachus; ſhe is ignorant of the reaſon of it, yet immediately retires, not doubting but his words flowed from a juſt cauſe, and not from a want of filial duty: ſhe is therefore ſaid by the poet to lodge his words in her memory, waiting till time ſhould unfold the myſtery. Dacier.

Proceed, falſe ſlave, and ſlight their empty words;
What! hopes the fool to pleaſe ſo many lords?
Young as I am, thy prince's vengeful hand,
Stretch'd forth in wrath, ſhall drive thee from the land.
Oh! could the vigour of this arm as well
Th' oppreſſive ſuitors from my walls expell!
Then what a ſhoal of lawleſs men ſhould go
To fill with tumult the dark courts below!
The ſuitors with a ſcornful ſmile ſurvey
The youth, indulging in the genial day.
Eumæus thus encourag'd, haſtes to bring
The ſtrifeful bow, and gives it to the king.
Old Euryclea calling then aſide,
Hear what Telemachus enjoins (he cry'd)

v. 407. *The ſuitors with a ſcornful ſmile*, etc.] Spondanus believes they laugh out of contempt of Telemachus; Dacier, becauſe they believe the time come which is to end all their doubts by the marriage of Penelope; they hope to draw the bow, and this hope mollifies their anger. But all theſe reaſons (as well as thoſe of Euſtathius) ſeem to be rather invented than natural: we may find a ſufficient reaſon for their laughter, from the ſharpneſs of Telemachus towards Eumæus; they rejoice to ſee an enemy (for ſuch they eſteem Eumæus) miſuſed, and this will likewiſe give a reaſon why the poet adds that they ceaſed their anger againſt Telemachus, namely, becauſe he gratifies their ill-will by threatning Eumæus.

v. 412. *Hear what Telemachus enjoins*, etc.] It is very evident that this command proceeds not from Telemachus but Ulyſſes: it was Ulyſſes who gave directions to ſhut the door of the womens apartment; but Eumæus is ignorant that Euryclea was acquainted with the return of Ulyſſes, and therefore ſpeaks as from Telemachus. He

At ev'ry portal let ſome matron wait,
And each lock faſt the well compacted gate;
And if unuſual ſounds invade their ear,
If arms, or ſhouts, or dying groans they hear,
Let none to call or iſſue forth preſume,
But cloſe attend the labours of the loom.

Her prompt obedience on his order waits;
Clos'd in an inſtant were the palace gates.
In the ſame moment forth Philætius flies,
Secures the court, and with a cable ties
The utmoſt gate; (the cable ſtrongly wrought
Of Byblos' reed, a ſhip from Ægypt brought;)
Then unperceiv'd and ſilent, at the board
His ſeat he takes, his eyes upon his lord.

And now his well-known bow the maſter bore,
Turn'd on all ſides, and view'd it o'er and o'er;

knew very well that ſhe would obey the orders of Telemachus, but if ſhe had not been acquainted with the return of Ulyſſes, ſhe would have made ſome heſitation, believing the beggar to be really a ſtranger and not Ulyſſes, Euſtathius.

v. 423. ——*the cable ſtrongly wrought*
Of Byblos' reed——]

The word in the Greek is βύβλινον, which we are not to underſtand of the Ægyptian Papyrus, but it is derived from βίβλος or βύβλος, a plant growing in the marſhes of Ægypt, βοτάνες ἐμφερὲς παπύρῳ, that bears the reſemblance of the Papyrus, as Euſtathius explains it. Of this plant the ancients made cordage; on the top of it there grew fibrous threads reſembling hair, and thus Strabo deſcribes it, ψιλὴ ῥάβδος ἐπ' ἄκρῳ ἔχουσα χαίτην, "a ſlender "twig bearing, as it were, hair on the top of it"

v. 428. *Turn'd on all ſides, and view'd it o'er and*

Left time or worms had done the weapon wrong,
Its owner absent, and untry'd so long.
While some deriding———How he turns the bow!
Some other like it sure the man must know,
Or else wou'd copy; or in bows he deals;
Perhaps he makes them, or perhaps he steals.———
Heav'n to this wretch (another cry'd) be kind!
And bless, in all to which he stands inclin'd,
With such good fortune as he now shall find.
Heedless he heard them; but disdain'd reply;
The bow perusing with exactest eye.
Then, as some heav'nly minstrel, taught to sing
High notes responsive to the trembling string,

o'er.] This little particularity is not inserted in vain: Ulysses is ready to engage in a terrible combat; it is therefore very necessary to be curious in the examination of the bow, to be certain that he might depend upon it; if he had observed that it had been decayed through time, his prudence would have furnished him with some other instrument. Eustathius is of opinion that this whole bow was made of horn, because ἴπες denotes worms that breed in horn: the bow, says that author, was made of horn, and not of wood, like the Scythian bows. This, it must be confessed, is not entirely satisfactory, because the bows were antiently tipt or pointed at the extremities with horn; and to this Ulysses may refer: but the other opinion is most probable, and Ovid thus understood it:

Penelope vires juvenum tentabat in arcu
Qui latus argueret corneus arcus erat.

v, 440. *Then, as some heav'nly minstrel,* etc.] Eustathius confesses himself to be greatly pleased with this comparison; it is very just and well suited to the purpose;

To ſome new ſtrain when he adapts the lyre,
Or the dumb lute refits with vocal wire,
Relaxes, ſtrains, and draws them to and fro;
So the great maſter drew the mighty bow:
And drew with eaſe. One hand aloft diſplay'd
The bending horns, and one the ſtring eſſay'd.
From his eſſaying hand the ſtring let fly
Twang'd ſhort and ſharp, like the ſhrill ſwallow's cry.
A gen'ral horror ran thro' all the race,
Sunk was each heart, and pale was ev'ry face.
Signs from above enſu'd: the unfolding ſky

the ſtrings of the lyre repreſent the bow ſtring, and the eaſe with which the lyriſt ſtretches them, admirably paints the facility with which Ulyſſes draws the bow. When ſimilitudes are borrowed from an object entirely different from the ſubject which they are brought to illuſtrate, they give us a double ſatisfaction, as they ſurprize us by ſhewing an agreement between ſuch things in which there ſeems to be the greateſt diſagreement.

v. 448. ——————*the ſtring let fly*
Twang'd ſhort and ſharp, like the ſhrill ſwallow's cry.]

The compariſon is not intended to repreſent the ſweetneſs of the ſound, but only the quality and nature of it; and means a harſh or jarring ſound, or ſomewhat rough, ὑπότρομον, as Euſtathius interprets it; ſuch a ſound as a ſwallow makes when ſhe ſings by ſtarts, and not in one even tenour. The ſwallow is inharmonious, and Ariſtophanes uſes χελιδόνων μουσεῖα in his frogs, to ſignify thoſe who are enemies to the muſes; and here the poet uſes it to denote a ſhrill, harſh, or jarring ſound.

v. 452. *Signs from above enſu'd*——] The ſignal of battle is here given in thunder by Jupiter, as in the eleventh book of the Iliad.

In light'ning burſt; Jove thunder'd from on high.
Fir'd at the call of heav'n's almigty Lord,
He ſnatch'd the ſhaft that glitter'd on the board:
(Faſt by, the reſt lay ſleeping in the ſheath,
But ſoon to fly the meſſengers of death.)

Now ſitting as he was, the chord he drew,
Thro' ev'ry ringlet levelling his view;
Then notch'd the ſhaft, releaſt, and gave it wing;
The whizzing arrow vaniſh'd from the ſtring,
Sung on direct, and thredded ev'ry ring.
The ſolid gate its fury ſcarcely bounds;
Pierc'd thro' and thro', the ſolid gate reſounds.

Then to the prince. Nor have I wrought thee ſhame;
Nor err'd this hand unfaithful to its aim;
Nor prov'd the toil too hard; nor have I loſt
That antient vigour, once my pride and boaſt,

Ev'n Jove, whoſe thunder ſpoke his wrath, diſtill'd
Red drops of blood o'er all the fatal field.

And again,

That inſtant Juno and the martial maid
In happy thunders promis'd Greece their aid.

This prepares us for the greatneſs of the following action, which is uſhered in with thunder from heaven: and we are not ſurprized to ſee Ulyſſes defeat his enemies, when Jupiter declares himſelf in his favour. Homer calls this thunder a ſign and a prodigy: it is a ſign, becauſe it predicts the event; and a prodigy, becauſe the thunder proceeds from a ſerene ſky. Euſtathius.

v. 467. ——*nor have I loſt*
That antient vigour——]

Ulyſſes ſpeaks not thus out of vanity, but ſolely to con-

Ill I deserv'd these haughty peers disdain;
Now let them comfort their dejected train,
In sweet repaste the present hour employ,
Nor wait 'till ev'ning for the genial joy.
Then to the lute's soft voice prolong the night,
Music, the banquet's most refin'd delight.
He said; then gave a nod; and at the word
Telemachus girds on his shining sword.
Fast by his father's side he takes his stand:
The beamy jav'lin lightens in his hand.

firm the courage of Telemachus, and his two friends, Eumæus and Philætius. He sets his vigour before their eyes, that they may have confidence in it in the succeeding engagement.

v. 471. *In sweet repast the present hour employ,*
Nor wait 'till ev'ning———]

This circumstance is very necessary; Ulysses excites the suitors to supper by day-light, because it would be more easy for him to assault them while they sat at table: the posture would give him some advantage; and he adds *before evening*, because if they had supped by the light of the torch, upon extinguishing it, they had greatly embarrassed him, and perhaps rendered his designs ineffectual through the benefit of the darkness. Neither is it without reason that he proposes singing and music; he does it to draw away their thoughts from any jealousy of intended violence; and by this method he gives the assault unexpectedly, and begins the slaughter before they are prepared to make any opposition.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XXII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The death of the ſuitors.

Ulyſſes begins the ſlaughter of the ſuitors by the death of Antinous. He declares himſelf, and lets fly his arrows at the reſt. Telemachus aſſiſts, and brings arms for his father, himſelf, Eumæus and Philætius. Melanthius does the ſame for the wooers. Minerva encourages Ulyſſes in the ſhape of Mentor. The ſuitors are all ſlain, only Medon and Phemius are ſpared. Melanthius and the unfaithful ſervants are executed. The reſt acknowledge their maſter with all demonſtrations of joy.

THEN fierce the heroe o'er the threſhold ſtrode;
Stript of his rags, he blaz'd out like a god.
Full in their face the lifted bow he bore,
And quiver'd deaths, a formidable ſtore;

We are now come to the great event or cataſtrophe of the Odyſſey, which is the deſtruction of the ſuitors. The manner by which the poet conducts it, has been praiſed and cenſured, by ſome as noble and heroic, by others as romantic and incredible: it is therefore highly neceſſary to vindicate Homer in the chief action of the whole poem, that he may not be found culpable, in the place where he ought to be the moſt exact and draw his heroe to the beſt advantage. The objection made againſt this deciſive action is, that the poet makes Ulyſſes perform impoſſibilities: no

Before his feet the ratling ſhow'r he threw,
And thus terrific, to the ſuitor crew.

one perſon, with ſuch ſmall aſſiſtance, being able to deſtroy above an hundred enemies. It is no anſwer to ſay that Pallas deſcends to aid Ulyſſes; for it has been already proved, that all incidents which require a divine probability, ſhould be ſo diſengaged from the action, that they may be ſubſtracted from it without deſtroying it; whereas this action is eſſential to it. No leſs a critic than Longinus, *chap.* 7. condemns Homer; for enumerating the faults of the Odyſſey, he thus proceeds: 'To theſe may 'be added the abſurdities he commits, in the account of 'the deſtruction of Penelope's ſuitors.' And Scaliger, *lib.* 5. of his Poetics is of the ſame opinion: *Ulyſſes interfecit arcu procos, inter quos et ipſum tantillum eſſet intervalli: quare omnes ſimul in eum impetum non fecerunt?* the ſtrength of this objection lies in the omiſſion of the ſuitors in not ruſhing at once upon Ulyſſes in an united body: now this was impoſſible; he ſtood upon the threſhold in a narrow paſs, and by this advantage he was able to make it good againſt a great inequality of numbers. It is not difficult to bring inſtances of a like nature from undoubted hiſtory: Cocles alone defended the bridge over the Tyber againſt the whole army of Porſena, and ſtood unmoveable till the Romans broke it down behind him. And Leonidas the Spartan general defended the paſs of Thermopylæ with a ſmall number, againſt three millions of Perſians led by Xerxes; and if he had not been betrayed, he would have probably defeated his whole army. In both theſe inſtances there was a greater inequality of numbers, than between Ulyſſes and the ſuitors. The reader will be reconciled to the probability of theſe relations, if he conſiders that the whole buſineſs of war was anciently decided by mere ſtrength of body: fire-arms now ſet all men upon a nearer level; but in theſe early ages the ſtrongeſt perſon was the greateſt heroe; a man of ſuperior

One vent'rous game this hand has won to day,
Another, princes! yet remains to play;

and uncommon ſtrength drove his enemies before him like an army of boys, and with as much facility. From this obſervation it is evident that Homer ſcarce tranſgreſſes the bounds of hiſtoric truth, when he deſcribes Achilles chaſing whole ſquadrons of Trojans: he wrote according to the manners of his times, and drew after the life, though ſometimes he improved a feature to give grace to the picture of his heroe: thus in the ſcripture from the mere advantage of ſtrength, we ſee a ſingle Goliah defy the whole armies of Iſrael.

Rapin commends the conduct of Homer in bringing about the deſtruction of the ſuitors. The unravelling the whole Odyſſey (ſays that author) by their deaths, is very great, and very becoming an heroe; that whole ſtory is dreſſed up in colours ſo decent, and at the ſame time ſo noble, that antiquity can hardly match any part of the narration; here Homer has diſplayed himſelf to the beſt advantage. I wiſh Rapin had given his reaſons, and not run into a general commendation: but we ſhall be ſufficiently convinced of the judgment of Homer in deſcribing the ſuitors falling chiefly by Ulyſſes if we conſider the nature of epic poetry. The chief action is to be performed by the heroe of the poem: thus Hector falls by Achilles, Turnus by Æneas: the death of the ſuitors is the chief action of the Odyſſey, and therefore it is neceſſarily to be executed by Ulyſſes; for if any other perſon had performed it, that perſon would have done an action more noble than the heroe of the poem, and eclipſed his glory. It is for the ſame reaſon that the poet refuſes all eaſy methods to re-eſtabliſh Ulyſſes: he throws him into difficulties which he is to ſurmount by his own proweſs and magnanimity. Homer might eaſily have raiſed an army, and placed Ulyſſes at the head of it; but the more difficult way being moſt conducive to his honour, he rejects all eaſy methods, ſhews

Another mark our arrow muſt attain.
Phœbus aſſiſt! nor be the labour vain.

him ſtruggling with infinite hazards, out of which he extricates himſelf perſonally by his wiſdom and courage. By theſe means he compleats the character of his heroe, leaves a noble image of his worth upon the minds of the ſpectators, and makes him go off the ſtage with the utmoſt applauſe.

v. 1. *Then fierce the heroe o'er the threshold ſtrode*, etc.] Plato was particularly ſtruck with the beauty of theſe lines: in his dialogue intituled Ion, *p.* 145. Socrates thus ſpeaks: 'When you repeat the verſes of Homer 'emphatically, and raviſh the whole audience, whether it 'be the paſſage where he ſings how Ulyſſes leaps upon the 'threſhold, diſcovers himſelf to the ſuitors, and pours his 'arrows before his feet; or where Achilles ruſhes upon 'Hector; or where he paints the lamentations of Hecuba, 'Priam, or Andromache; tell me, are you any longer 'maſter of your own paſſions? are you not tranſported? 'and raviſhed with divine fury, think yourſelf preſent at 'the very actions, either in Ithaca or Troy?' It muſt indeed be allowed, that Homer here paints to the life; we ſee Ulyſſes, his motion, his attitude, and the noble fury with which he begins the onſet. The poet intereſts us in the cauſe of his heroe, and we fight on his ſide againſt his enemies.

Euſtathius obſerves that inſtead of ῥάχος, the Æolians wrote βράκος; an obſervation of too little importance to have been regarded, if he had not given us a fragment of Sappho as a proof of it.

Τὶς δ' ἀγροιῶτις θέλγει νοὸν
Οὐκ ἐπισαμένη τὰ βράκεα ἕλκειν
Ἐπὶ τῶν σφυρῶν;———

which he thus explains,

Swift as the word the parting arrow ſings,
And bears thy fate, Antinous, on its wings,
Wretch that he was, of unprophetic ſoul!
High in his hands he rear'd the golden bowl;
Ev'n then to drain it lengthen'd out his breath;
Chang'd to the deep, the bitter draught of death:
For fate who fear'd amidſt a feaſtful band?
And fate to numbers by a ſingle hand.

What ruſtic beauty dreſs'd in aukward charms
Detains my lover from his Sappho's arms?

The circumſtance of throwing the arrows before his feet is not inſerted without a reaſon; Ulyſſes could reach them from thence with more facility and expedition, than if they had hung at his ſhoulder in the quiver.

v. 10. *Phœbus aſſiſt!*] Ulyſſes addreſſes a prayer to Apollo to give ſucceſs to his preſent enterprize; he directs it to him, becauſe he is the god of archery; and he concludes in four words, in compliance with the exigence of the time, which will nor permit him to ſpeak at large. This prayer to Apollo confirms my obſervation, that Penelope propoſed the trial of the bow in honour of that deity, and we find that it was cuſtomary from a remarkable paſſage in the Iliad, *lib.* 4.

But firſt to ſpeed thy ſhaft, addreſs thy vow
To Lycian Phœbus with the ſilver bow;
And ſwear the firſtlings of the flock to pay
On Zelia's altars, to the god of day.

It is from the urgency of the time that the ſpeech of Ulyſſes, as well as the prayer, is conciſe: it would have been very injudicious, when he was ready to aſſault his enemies unexpectedly, to have prefaced the onſet with a long oration; this would have given them an alarm, and time to make an oppoſition.

v. 18. *And fate to numbers by a ſingle hand.*] This

Full thro' his throat Ulyſſes' weapon paſt,
And pierc'd the neck. He falls, and breathes his laſt.
The tumbling goblet the wide floor o'erflows,
A ſtream of gore burſt ſpouting from his noſe;
Grim in convulſive agonies he ſprawls:
Before him ſpurn'd, the loaded table falls,
And ſpreads the pavement with a mingled flood
Of floating meats, and wine, and human blood.
Amaz'd, confounded, as they ſaw him fall,
Uproſe the throngs tumultuous round the hall;

particular is very artful; the poet while he writes, ſeems to be ſurprized at the difficulty of the enterprize he is about to relate. He is in doubt of the great event, and ſtands ſtill in admiration of it. This has a double effect; it ſets the courage of Ulyſſes in a ſtrong point of light, who executes what might be almoſt thought an impoſſibility; and at the ſame time it excellently contributes to make the ſtory credible; for Homer appears to be held in ſuſpenſe by the greatneſs of the action: an intimation that nothing but the real truth and deference to veracity could extort from him a belief of it: thus by ſeeming to make the relation improbable the poet eſtabliſhes the probability of it. Euſtathius.

v. 22. *A ſtream of gore burſt ſpouting*———] The word in the original is αὐλὸς which commonly ſignifies a pipe or muſical inſtrument: the ancients (obſerves Euſtathius) uſed it to denote a fountain; here therefore it implies a flux or fountain of blood, κρουνὸς ἐξακόντισμα αἵματος; the word therefore very happily paints the blood ſpouting from the noſtrils, as from a fountain; and in this ſenſe, it gives us a full image of the nature of the wound; the blood ſprung as from a pipe, through the mouth of the wound, or from the veins, through the noſtrils.

O'er all the dome they caſt a haggard eye
Each look'd for arms in vain; no arms were nigh:
Aim'ſt thou at princes? (all amaz'd they ſaid)
Thy laſt of games unhappy haſt thou play'd;
Thy erring ſhaft has made our braveſt bleed,
And death, unlucky gueſt, attends thy deed.
Vulturs ſhall tear thee ——Thus incens'd they ſpoke,
While each to chance aſcrib'd the wond'rous ſtroke,
Blind as they were; for death ev'n now invades
His deſtin'd prey, and wraps them all in ſhades.
Then grimly frowning with a dreadful look,
That wither'd all their hearts, Ulyſſes ſpoke.
Dogs, ye have had your day; ye fear'd no more
Ulyſſes vengeful from the Trojan ſhore;

v. 35. ——*thus incens'd they ſpoke,*
While each to chance aſcrib'd the wond'rous ſtroke.]
This paſſage was looked upon as ſpurious by the ancients; for they thought it impoſſible that all the ſuitors ſhould ſpeak the ſame ſentiment, as by compact, like a Chorus in a tragedy: they appealed to the cuſtom of Homer himſelf, who continually wrote

Ὧδε τὶς εἰπεσχεν.

Euſtathius anſwers, that the poet ſpeaks thus confuſedly, to repreſent the confuſion of the ſuitors at the death of Antinous. Dacier defends him by ſaying, that all the ſuitors imagined that Antinous was ſlain by accident, and therefore the whole aſſembly having the ſame ſentiment, the poet might aſcribe to every member of it the ſame expreſſion. Either of theſe ſolutions explains the difficulty.

v. 42. *Ulyſſes vengeful from the Trojan ſhore.*] The mention of the return of Ulyſſes from Troy is not inſerted caſually: he ſpeaks thus to intimidate his enemies, by

While to your luſt and ſpoil a guardleſs prey,
Our houſe our wealth, our helpleſs handmaids lay:
Not ſo content, with bolder frenzy fir'd,
Ev'n to our bed preſumptuous you aſpir'd:
Laws or divine or human fail'd to move,
Or ſhame of men, or dread of gods above;
Heedleſs alike of infamy or praiſe,
Or fame's eternal voice in future days:
The hour of vengeance, wretches, now is come,
Impending fate is yours, and inſtant doom.
Thus dreadful he. Confus'd the ſuitors ſtood,
From their pale cheeks recedes the flying blood;
Trembling they ſought their guilty heads to hide,
Alone the bold Eurymachus reply'd,
If, as thy words import, (he thus began)
Ulyſſes lives, and thou the mighty man,
Great are thy wrongs and much haſt thou ſuſtain'd
In thy ſpoil'd palace, and exhauſted land;
The cauſe and author of thoſe guilty deeds,
Lo! at thy feet unjuſt Antinous bleeds.
Not love but wild ambition was his guide,
To ſlay thy ſon, thy kingdoms to divide,
Theſe were his aims, but juſter Jove deny'd.

recalling to their minds all the brave actions that he had performed before it. Were not this his intention, he would have varied his expreſſion, for in reality he has been abſent from Troy near ten years, and returns from the Phæacian, not the Trojan ſhores. Euſtathius.

v. 64. *To ſlay thy ſon, thy kingdoms to divide.*] This expreſſion is judiciouſly inſerted, and with good reaſon put into the mouth of one of the ſuitors, namely Eurymа-

Since cold in death th' offender lies; oh ſpare
Thy ſuppliant people, and receive their pray'r!
Braſs, gold, and treaſures ſhall the ſpoil defray,
Two hundred oxen ev'ry prince ſhall pay:
The waſte of years refunded in a day.

chus. The poet is now puniſhing them for their crimes; it is therefore very neceſſary that the reader ſhould be ſatisfied that they deſerve puniſhment; for if it be not an act of juſtice, it is murder. The poet therefore brings them all confeſſing themſelves guilty by the mouth of Eurymachus; their crime is the intended murder of Telemachus, and the uſurpation of the throne of Ulyſſes. If this had not been ſet in a clear light, there might have been room for a ſuſpicion that Ulyſſes inflicted a puniſhment too great for the guilt of the ſuitors. For was it a crime that deſerved death, to aim at the marriage of Penelope? this is not to be ſuppoſed; for they took her to be a widow, and might therefore without a crime aſk her in marriage. Was death due for the waſte and profuſion of the riches of Ulyſſes? This might have been redreſſed, by a full repayment, and a juſt equivalent. Homer therefore, to ſhew that there is a cauſe for the ſeverity of the puniſhment, ſets their crimes in open view, which are an intentional murder, and an actual treaſon. The place likewiſe where he inſerts this circumſtance is well choſen, *viz.* in the place where the puniſhment is related; and by this method we acknowledge the equity of it. It is true, Eurymachus throws the guilt upon Antinous as the chief offender; but all the ſuitors have been his aſſociates, and approved of all his violent and bloody deſigns through the Odyſſey, and therefore are juſtly involved in the ſame puniſhment; ſo that Ulyſſes puniſhes rebellious ſubjects by the authority of a king. Homer likewiſe obſerves juſtice in the death of Antinous; he is the firſt in the guilt, and the firſt that falls by his hero's hands.

'Till then thy wrath is juſt.——Ulyſſes burn'd
With high diſdain, and ſternly thus return'd.

All, all the treaſures that enrich'd our throne
Before your rapines, join'd with all your own,
If offer'd, vainly ſhould for mercy call;
'Tis you that offer, and I ſcorn them all;
Your blood is my demand, your lives the prize,
'Till pale as yonder wretch each ſuitor lies.
Hence with thoſe coward terms: Or fight or fly,
This choice is left ye, to reſiſt or die
And die I truſt ye ſhall.——He ſternly ſpoke:
With guilty fears the pale aſſembly ſhook.
Alone Eurymachus exhorts the train:
Yon archer, comrades, will not ſhoot in vain;
But from the threſhold ſhall his darts be ſped,
(Whoe'er he be) 'till ev'ry prince lie dead.
Be mindful of yourſelves, draw forth your ſwords,
And to his ſhafts obtend theſe ample boards,
(So need compells). Then all united ſtrive
The bold invader from his poſt to drive;
The city rouz'd ſhall to our reſcue haſte,
And this mad archer ſoon have ſhot his laſt.

v. 88. *And to his ſhafts obtend theſe ample boards.*] Eurymachus exhorts the ſuitors to make uſe of the tables to oppoſe Ulyſſes in the manner of ſhields; from whence, obſerves Euſtathius, it may be gathered that every ſuitor had a peculiar table. This may be confirmed from this book; for when Antinous falls, he overturns a table; which, if there had been but one would have been too large to be thus overthrown: beſides he ſpeaks in the plural number, πραπέζας.

Swift as he ſpoke, he drew his traytor ſword,
And like a lion ruſh'd againſt his lord:
The wary chief the ruſhing foe repreſt,
Who met the point, and forc'd it in his breaſt:
His failing hand deſerts the lifted ſword,
And prone he falls extended o'er the board!
Before him wide, in mixt effuſion roll
Th' untaſted viands, and the jovial bowl.
Full thro' his liver paſt the mortal wound,
With dying rage his forehead beats the ground;
He ſpurn'd the ſeat with fury as he fell,
And the fierce ſoul to darkneſs div'd, and hell.
Next bold Amphinomus his arm extends
To force the paſs: the godlike man defends.
Thy ſpear, Telemachus! prevents th' attack,
The brazen weapon driving thro' his back,

v. 91. *The city rouz'd ſhall to our reſcue haſte.*] It is impoſſible but that the ſuitors muſt have many friends amongſt the Ithacans. Intereſt or ill-humour engages men in faction; but this is not the full import of the ſenſe of Homer: the Ithacans were ignorant that Ulyſſes was returned, and no wonder therefore if they had engaged in defence of the princes of their land, againſt a ſtranger and a beggar; for ſuch in appearance was Ulyſſes.

v. 108 *The brazen weapon driving thro' his back.*] Euſtathius, and Spondanus from him, interpret this paſſage very much to the diſadvantage of the courage of Telemachus: they obſerve that he is yet new to the horrors of war, and therefore wanting the heart to meet his enemy in the front, gives him this wound between the ſhoulders: that as ſoon as he has given the blow, out of fear he leaves the ſpear in the wound; an action as diſ-

Thence thro' his breaſt its bloody paſſage tore;
Flat falls he thund'ring on the marble floor,
And his cruſh'd forehead marks the ſtone with gore.
He left his jav'lin in the dead, for fear
The long incumbrance of the weighty ſpear
To the fierce foe advantage might afford,
To ruſh between, and uſe the ſhorten'd ſword.

reputable, as to throw away the ſhield in battle; and laſtly, that it is fear that ſuggeſts to his mind the expedient to fetch the arms, a pretext to be diſtant from danger. But it is not difficult to defend Telemachus. Amphinomus was aſſaulting Ulyſſes, and conſequently his back was turned towards Telemachus, and this occaſions the wound in that part. This combat is not a combat of honour, where points of ceremony are obſerved; Telemachus was therefore at liberty to deſtroy his enemy by any methods, without any imputation of cowardice; eſpecially conſidering the inequality of the parties. Neither is it out of fear that he quits his ſpear; but from a dictate of wiſdom: he is afraid leſt ſome of the ſuitors ſhould attack him while he is diſingaging it, and take him at an advantage, while he has no weapon to uſe in his own defence; beſides, he has no farther occaſion for it; he haſtes away to provide other arms; not only for himſelf, but for Ulyſſes and his friends; and this is ſo far from being the ſuggeſtion of fear, that it is the reſult of wiſdom.

There is ſome difficulty in the expreſſion προπρήνει τύψας; the meaning of it is, leſt he ſhould receive a deſcending blow: the word is an adjective, and Euſtathius tells us that χερὶ is to be underſtood; I ſhould rather chuſe φασγάνῳ, which immediately precedes, it being as good ſenſe to ſay, a wound is given by a deſcending ſword, as a deſcending hand.

With ſpeedy ardour to his ſire he flies,
And, arm, great father! arm (in haſte he cries)
Lo hence I run for other arms to wield,
For miſſile jav'lins, and for helm and ſhield;
Faſt by our ſide let either faithful ſwain
In arms attend us, and their part ſuſtain.
Haſte and return (Ulyſſes made reply)
While yet th' auxiliar ſhafts this hand ſupply;
Leſt thus alone, encounter'd by an hoſt,
Driv'n from the gate, th' important paſs be loſt.
With ſpeed Telemachus obeys, and flies
Where pil'd on heaps the royal armour lies;
Four brazen helmets, eight refulgent ſpears,
And four broad bucklers, to his ſire he bears:

v. 117. ——*arm (in haſte he cries)*] Homer almoſt conſtantly gives the epithet πτερόεντα to ἔπεα; *winged words*. Plutarch, in his treatiſe upon Garrulity, gives us the meaning of it. A word (ſays that author) while it remains unſpoken is a ſecret, but being communicated, it changes its name into common rumour; it is then flown from us; and this is the reaſon why Homer calls words *winged*: he that lets a bird fly from his hand, does not eaſily catch it again; and he that lets a word ſlip from his tongue cannot recall it; it flies abroad, and flutters from place to place every moment. It has indeed in ſome paſſages a ſtill cloſer meaning; when a perſon ſpeaks with precipitation, the epithet expreſſes the ſwiftneſs of the ſpeech, the words are winged; it is here applied with particular propriety; Telemachus aſks a queſtion in the compaſs of four lines, and receives an anſwer in two from Ulyſſes; the time not allowing any delay.

At once in brazen Panoply they ſhone.
At once each ſervant brac'd his armour on;
Around their king a faithful guard they ſtand,
While yet each ſhaft flew deathful from his hand:
Chief after chief expir'd at ev'ry wound,
And ſwell'd the bleeding mountain on the ground.
Soon as his ſtore of flying fates was ſpent,
Againſt the wall he ſet the bow unbent:
And now his ſhoulders bear the maſſy ſhield,
And now his hands two beamy jav'lins wield;
He frowns beneath his nodding plume, that play'd
O'er the high creſt, and caſt a dreadful ſhade.
There ſtood a window near, whence looking down
From o'er the porch, appear'd the ſubject town.

v. 137. *Againſt the wall he ſet the bow unbent.*] The poet may be thought too circumſtantial in the diſpoſal of the bow; but there is a reaſon for it; he ſhews Ulyſſes placed it out of the reach of the ſuitors, who, if they had ſeized the bow, might have furniſhed themſelves with arrows from the dead bodies of their friends, and employed them againſt Ulyſſes: this caution was therefore neceſſary. Euſtathius.

v. 142. *There ſtood a window near, whence looking down,*
From o'er the porch, appear'd the ſubject town.] The word in the Greek is ὑψοθύρη, *janua ſuperior*, and it is likewiſe uſed a little lower. It has given great trouble to the commentators to explain the ſituation of theſe two paſſages. Dacier imagines that by the former there was a deſcent into the court-yard, and ſo to the ſtreet; but this cannot be true: for Agelaus exhorting his aſſociates to ſeize this paſſage, makes uſe of the word ἀναβάσιν, which ſignifies to *aſcend*, and not to *deſcend* into

A double ſtrength of valves ſecur'd the place,
A high and narrow, but the only paſs: 145

the court-yard; beſides, he bids them raiſe the people by *ſhouting to them*, which ſeems to imply, that this place overlooked the ſtreets, from whence a ſhout might be heard by the people. Ὀρσοθύρη (obſerves Euſtathius) is θύρη ἐις ἣν ὄρνυται τὶς θέλων ἰδεῖν ἐκεῖθεν, that is, 'a door 'by which a perſon aſcends to obtain a proſpect:' this probably led to the roof of the porch of the palace fronting the ſtreet, from whence a perſon ſtanding in the open air, and ſhouting, might raiſe the city; or as for greater clearneſs it is here tranſlated a window, which anſwers all theſe purpoſes.

But there is ſtill a difficulty ariſing from the word λαύγεν, which is thus ſolved by Euſtathius; λαύγη ἐστὶν ὁ πρὸς τῇ ὀρσοθύρῃ ἀγὼν στενωπὸς, that is, a narrow paſſage leading to this private window or door; and he afterwards interprets it by στενὴ ὁδὸς.

From what has been obſerved, it appears evidently that there was another paſſage to the upper apartments of the palace: for this was guarded by Eumæus, and was inacceſſible, and conſequently Melanthius conveys the arms to the ſuitors by ſome other ſtair-caſe. This Homer expreſſes by ἀναῤῥῶγας μεγάρου; the former word is very well explained by Heſychius; it ſignifies the paſſages of the palace leading from chamber to chamber, or the διοδοὶ of the apartments. Ῥωγὴ properly denotes a rupture, and here repreſents the openings of the paſſages from room to room. The ancients thought this whole paſſage ſo obſcure, that they drew a plan of theſe inward paſſages of the palace, as Euſtathius informs us; in this they figured the porch, the higher aperture the other ſtair-caſe, and the room where the arms were laid. But Dacier ſtarts another difficulty: if Melanthius could go up to the room where the arms lay, why could he not go from thence into the courts of the palace, and raiſe the city? the anſwer is, becauſe the arms were placed in an inward

The cautious king, with all preventing care,
To guard that outlet, plac'd Eumæus there:
When Agelaus thus: Has none the ſenſe
To mount yon window, and alarm from thence
The neighbour town? the town ſhall force the door,
And this bold archer ſoon ſhall ſhoot no more.
Melanthius then: That outlet to the gate
So near adjoins, that one may guard the ſtrait.
But other methods of defence remain,
Myſelf with arms can furniſh all the train;
Stores from the royal magazine I bring,
And their own darts ſhall pierce the prince and king.
He ſaid; and mounting up the lofty ſtairs,
Twelve ſhields, twelve lances, and twelve helmets bears:

apartment, and there was no paſſage from thence into the palace-yards. Her miſtake aroſe from her opinion that there was an entry into the palace by the ἀρσοθυρη, which opinion is refuted in the beginning of this annotation. If indeed Telemachus had brought down the arms this way, then there muſt have been a paſſage for Melanthius to the place from whence Agelaus bids him raiſe the city; for if Telemachus had paſſed to the armory by it, why might not Melanthius from it? But this is not the caſe; for this door or window is not mentioned till Telemachus has furniſhed Ulyſſes and his friends with armour; and conſequently Homer cannot intend that we ſhould underſtand that Telemachus aſcended to the armory by it.

v. 159. *Twelve ſhields, twelve lances, and twelve helmets bears.*] Ariſtarchus, remarks Euſtathius, blamed this deſcription as incredible; for how could one perſon be able to carry ſuch a load of armour at one time? but we are not to make this ſuppoſition; the poet ſpeaks indefinitely, and leaves us at liberty to conjecture that

All arm, and ſudden round the hall appears
A blaze of bucklers, and a wood of ſpears.
The hero ſtands oppreſt with mighty woe,
On ev'ry ſide he ſees the labour grow:
Oh curſt event! and oh unlook'd-for aid!
Melanthius or the women have betray'd——
Oh my dear ſon!——The father, with a ſigh!
Then ceas'd; the filial virtue made reply.
Falſhood is folly, and 'tis juſt to own
The fault committed; this was mine alone;
My haſte neglected yonder door to bar,
And hence the villain has ſupply'd their war.
Run, good Eumæus then, and (what before
I thoughtleſs err'd in) well ſecure that door:

Melanthius brought them at ſeveral times; thus a little lower we find him going again for arms to furniſh the reſt of the ſuitors.

v. 172. *Run, good Eumæus,* etc.] This paſſage, where Telemachus bids Eumæus go and ſee who brings the arms, proves that Telemachus did not before abſent himſelf from the battle out of cowardice; here he chuſes to partake the danger with Ulyſſes, and ſends Eumæus and Philætius to execute his orders; a ſign that he does not conſult his ſafety at the expence of his honour. Euſtathius.

But it may ſeem extraordinary, that Ulyſſes and Telemachus ſhould be in doubt to know the perſon who brought the arms to the ſuitors; eſpecially when Agelaus had held a public conference with Melanthius in order to it; but, anſwers Euſtathius, they ſpoke with a low voice, and at a proper diſtance from Ulyſſes. It may alſo be objected, that Melanthius could not poſſibly bring the arms without the obſervation of Ulyſſes and his friends. To ſolve this difficulty we muſt have recourſe to the ſe-

Learn if by female fraud this deed were done,
Or (as my thought misgives) by Dolius' son.
While yet they spoke, in quest of arms again
To the high chamber stole the faithless swain.
Not unobserv'd. Eumæus watchful ey'd,
And thus address'd Ulysses near his side.
The miscreant we suspected takes that way;
Him, if this arm be powerful, shall I slay?
Or drive him hither, to receive the meed,
From thy own hand, of this detested deed?
Not so (reply'd Ulysses) leave him there,
For us sufficient is another care;
Within the stricture of this palace wall
To keep inclos'd his masters till they fall.

cond private door, or ὀρσοθύρη, mentioned in a former annotation: by this passage he ascends and descends without a discovery; that passage standing in such a situation, as not to be visible to those who were on the opposite side of the palace. What may seem to contradict this observation is, what Homer afterwards adds, for he directly tells us, that Eumæus observed that the person who brought the arms was Melanthius; but that expression may only imply, that he saw Melanthius going from the rest of the company, and hasting toward that ascent, and therefore justly concludes him to be the person.

v. 187. *To keep inclos'd his masters*——] It may be asked, when Eumæus retires from the guard of the passage, what hinders the suitors from seizing it, and by it giving notice to the city of their danger? What Ulysses here says obviates this objection. He tells Eumæus, that he and Telemachus will defend it against all the efforts of his enemies: by this expression he gives us to understand, that Telemachus shall post himself in the place of

Go you and ſeize the felon! backward bind
His arms and legs, and fix a plank behind;
On this, his body by ſtrong cords extend,
And on a column near the roof ſuſpend;
So ſtudy'd tortures his vile days ſhall end.

The ready ſwains obey'd with joyful haſte,
Behind the felon unperceiv'd they paſt,
As round the room in queſt of arms he goes:
(The half-ſhut door conceal'd his lurking foes)
One hand ſuſtain'd a helm, and one the ſhield
Which old Laertes wont in youth to wield,
Cover'd with duſt, with dryneſs chapt and worn,
The braſs corroded, and the leather torn:

Eumæus, and make it good till he has executed juſtice upon Melanthius.

v. 197. *One hand ſuſtain'd a helm, and one the ſhield*] We ſee Melanthius after a diligent ſearch finds only one helm and one ſhield; and the ſhield is deſcribed as almoſt ſpoiled with age: from hence Euſtathius gathers that there were no more left in the armory; for it is probable that Melanthius would not have returned with ſo few arms if he could have found more; nor would he have brought the decayed ſhield, if he could have ſupplied himſelf with a ſtronger; ſo that all the arms of Ulyſſes were ſeventeen helmets, twelve at firſt delivered to the ſuitors by Melanthius, one more he was now bringing, and Ulyſſes and his friends were in poſſeſſion of four: there were the ſame number of ſhields, and twenty ſpears, twelve given to the ſuitors, and eight to the aſſiſtance of Ulyſſes. This was his private armory for the defence of his palace: and we are not to conclude, that theſe were the whole arms of the nation; there probably was a public repoſitory for armour for the public uſe of their armies againſt their enemies.

Thus laden, o'er the threſhold as he ſtept,
Fierce on the villain from each ſide they leapt;
Back by the hair the trembling daſtard drew,
And down reluctant on the pavement threw.
Active and pleas'd, the zealous ſwains fulfil
At ev'ry point their maſter's rigid will:
Firſt, faſt behind, his hands and feet they bound,
Then ſtrengthen'd cords involv'd his body round;
So drawn aloft, athwart the column ty'd,
The howling felon ſwung from ſide to ſide.

Eumæus ſcoffing, then with keen diſdain:
There paſs thy pleaſing night, oh gentle ſwain!
On that ſoft pillow, from that envy'd height
Firſt may'ſt thou ſee the ſpringing dawn of light;
So timely riſe, when morning ſtreaks the eaſt,
To drive thy victims to the ſuitors feaſt.

This ſaid, they left him, tortur'd as he lay,
Secur'd the door, and haſty ſtrode away:
Each, breathing death, reſum'd his dang'rous poſt
Near great Ulyſſes; four againſt an hoſt.
When lo! deſcending to her hero's aid
Jove's daughter Pallas, war's triumphant maid:
In Mentor's friendly form ſhe join'd his ſide;
Ulyſſes ſaw, and thus with tranſport cry'd.

Come, ever welcome, and thy ſuccour lend;
Oh ev'ry ſacred name in one! my friend!
Early we lov'd, and long our loves have grown:
What-e'er through life's whole ſeries I have done
Or good, or grateful, now to mind recall,
And aiding this one hour, repay it all.

Thus he; but pleasing hopes his bosom warm
Of Pallas latent in the friendly form.
The adverse host the phantom warrior ey'd,
And first loud-threat'ning, Agelaus cry'd.

Mentor, beware, nor let that tongue persuade
Thy frantic arm to lend Ulysses aid;
Our force successful shall our threat make good,
And with the sire's and son's commix thy blood.
What hop'st thou here? Thee first the sword shall slay,
Then lop thy whole posterity away;
Far hence thy banish'd consort shall we send;
With his, thy forfeit lands and treasures blend;
Thus, and thus only shalt thou join thy friend.

His barb'rous insult ev'n the goddess fires,
Who thus the warrior to revenge inspires.

Art thou Ulysses? where then shall we find
The patient body and the constant mind?

v. 246. *Art thou Ulysses*, etc.] Pallas is here an allegorical deity, and represents the courage and wisdom which was exerted by Ulysses in the destruction of the suitors: the poet puts the words into the mouth of a goddess, to give ornament and dignity to his poetry; but they are only the suggestions of his own heart, which reproaches him for being so slow in punishing the insolence of his adversaries. If we take them in this sense they will be in the nature of a soliloquy: the poet indeed was obliged to introduce a deity, to give importance to the decisive action of his whole poem: thus Jupiter assists Æneas in Virgil; Minerva, Achilles in the Iliad, and the same goddess Ulysses here in the Odyssey. I very well know, that all these passages have been blamed by some critics, as derogatory to the courage of these heroes, who cannot conquer their enemies but through the assistance

That courage, once the Trojans daily dread,
Known nine long years, and felt by heroes dead?
And where that conduct, which reveng'd the luſt
Of Priam's race, and laid proud Troy in duſt?
If this, when Helen was the cauſe, were done,
What for thy country now, thy queen, thy ſon?
Riſe then in combat, at my ſide attend;
Obſerve what vigour gratitude can lend,
And foes how weak, oppos'd againſt a friend!
She ſpoke; but willing longer to ſurvey
The ſire and ſon's great acts, with-held the day;
By farther toils decreed the brave to try,
And level'd pois'd the wings of victory:
Then with a change of form eludes their ſight
Perch'd like a ſwallow on a rafter's height,
And unperceiv'd, enjoys the riſing fight.

of a deity. The reader may be pleaſed to look back for a full vindication of Homer and Virgil, to Lib. 3. Note 43. of the Odyſſey.

We may obſerve that a deity deſcends to aſſiſt Ulyſſes, but that the ſuitors are left to their own conduct: this furniſhes us with a very juſt and pious moral, and teaches us that heaven guards and aſſiſts good men in adverſity, but abandons the wicked, and lets them periſh for their follies.

v 262. *Perch'd like a ſwallow*——] We have ſeen deities, both in the Iliad and Odyſſey, changing themſelves into the ſhape of birds: thus, lib. 7. v. 67. of the Iliad.

Th' Athenian maid, and glorious god of day,
With ſilent joy the ſettling hoſt ſurvey,

Damaſtor's ſon, bold Agelaus, leads
The guilty war; Eurynomus ſucceeds;
With theſe, Piſander great Polyctor's ſon,
Sage Polybus, and ſtern Amphimedon,
With Demoptolemus: theſe ſix ſurvive,
The beſt of all the ſhafts had left alive.
Amidſt the carnage deſp'rate as they ſtand,
Thus Agelaus rouz'd the lagging band.

The hour is come, when yon' fierce man no more
With bleeding princes ſhall beſtrow the floor:
Lo! Mentor leaves him with an empty boaſt;
The four remain, but four againſt an hoſt.
Let each at once diſcharge the deadly dart,
One ſure of ſix ſhall reach Ulyſſes' heart:
Thus ſhall one ſtroke the glory loſt regain:
The reſt muſt periſh, their great leader ſlain.

In form like vulturs, on the beech's height
They ſit conceal'd, and wait the future fight.

This perhaps may be the occaſion of all ſuch fictions. The ſuperſtition of the heathen world induced the ancients to believe that the appearance of any bird in a critical hour, was a ſign of the preſence of a divinty, and by degrees they began to perſuade themſelves, that the gods appeared to them in the form of theſe birds. Hence aroſe all the honours paid to augurs, and the reliance upon divination drawn from the flight of birds: and almoſt every deity had a bird ſacred to him. The eagle to Jupiter, the peacock to Juno, *etc.* Pallas here takes the form of a ſwallow, becauſe it is a domeſtic bird, and therefore may be ſaid to appear within the walls of the palace with moſt probability.

Then all at once their mingled lances threw,
And thirſty all of one man's blood they flew;
In vain! Minerva turn'd them in her breath,
And ſcatter'd ſhort, or wide, the points of death;
With deaden'd ſound, one on the threſhold falls,
One ſtrikes the gate, one rings againſt the walls;
The ſtorm paſt innocent. The god-like man
Now loftier trod, and dreadful thus began.
'Tis now, brave friends, our turn, at once to throw
(So ſpeed them heav'n) our jav'lins at the foe.
That impious race to all their paſt miſdeeds
Would add our blood. Injuſtice ſtill proceeds.
He ſpoke: at once their fiery lances flew:
Great Demoptolemus, Ulyſſes flew;
Euryades receiv'd the prince's dart;
The goat-herd's quiver'd in Piſander's heart;
Fierce Elatus by thine, Eumæus, falls;
Their fall in thunder ecchoes round the walls.
The reſt retreat: the victors now advance,
Each from the dead reſumes his bloody lance.

v. 298. ——— *The victors now advance,*
Each from the dead reſumes his bloody lance.]
The danger beginning to abate by the fall of the chief of the enemy, Ulyſſes advances from his ſtand: there was a neceſſity for this conduct: Ulyſſes and his three aſſiſtants had killed four enemies with their ſpears; and conſequently the poet was obliged to ſupply them with freſh weapons, otherwiſe, if they had diſcharged their ſpears once more, they muſt have been left naked and defenceleſs, having only two a-piece brought by Telemachus. This obſervation ſhews the exactneſs which Homer maintains in his relation.

Again the foe discharge the steely show'r;
Again made frustrate by the virgin pow'r.
Some, turn'd by Pallas, on the threshold fall,
Some wound the gate, some ring against the wall;
Some weak, or pond'rous with the brazen head,
Drop harmless, on the pavement sounding dead.
Then bold Amphimedon his jav'lin cast;
Thy hand, Telemachus, it lightly raz'd;
And from Ctesippus' arm the spear elanc'd,
On good Eumæus' shield and shoulder glanc'd;
Not less'n'd of their force, so slight the wound,
Each sung along, and drop'd upon the ground.
Fate doom'd thee next, Eurydamas, to bear
Thy death, ennobled by Ulysses' spear.
By the bold son Amphimedon was slain;
And Polybus renown'd the faithful swain.
Pierc'd through the breast the rude Ctesippus bled,
And thus Philætius gloried o'er the dead.
There end thy pompous vaunts, and high disdain;
Oh sharp in scandal, voluble and vain!
How weak is mortal pride! To heav'n alone
Th' event of actions and our fates are known:
Scoffer, behold what gratitude we bear:
The victim's heel is answer'd with this spear.

v. 323 *The victim's heel is answer'd with this spear.*] This refers to a passage in the latter end of the twentieth book of the Odyssey, where Ctesippus throws the foot of a bullock at Ulysses. Philætius here gives him a mortal wound with his spear, and tells him it is a return for the foot of the bullock. Eustathius informs us, that this be-

Ulyſſes brandiſh'd high his vengeful ſteel,
And Damaſtorides that inſtant fell;
Faſt by, Leocritus expiring lay,
The prince's jav'lin tore its bloody way
Through all his bowels: down he tumbles prone,
His batter'd front and brains beſmear the ſtone.
Now Pallas ſhines confeſs'd; aloft ſhe ſpreads
The arm of vengeance o'er their guilty heads;
The dreadful Ægis blazes in their eye;
Amaz'd they ſee, they tremble, and the fly:

came a proverb, τῶτο τὸ ἀντὶ πόδος ξεινήϊον, to expreſs a return of evil for evil; the like may be obſerved of the death of Antinous, who was killed as he lifted the bowl to drink.

Πολλὰ μεταξὺ πέλει κύλικος καὶ χείλεος ἄκρου.

Which is exactly rendered by our proverb, *Many things happen between the cup and the lip.* Thus likewiſe the kindneſs of Cyclops was uſed proverbially, to denote a ſevere injury diſguiſed under a ſeeming civility, that monſter having promiſed Ulyſſes mercy, but it was only the mercy to devour him laſt. Theſe little inſtances prove the great veneration the ancients had for Homer.

v. 332. *The dreadful Ægis*———] This ſhield is at large deſcribed, lib. 5. of the Iliad.

——round the margin roll'd;
A fringe of ſerpents, hiſſing, guard the gold;
Here all the terrors of grim war appear;
Here rages force, here tremble flight and fear;
Here ſtorm'd contention, and here fury frown'd,
And the dire orb portentous Gorgon crown'd.

We ſee the terrible effects which the ſhield cauſes are created by the poet into a kind of beings, and animated to fight on the ſide of his hero.

Confus'd, distracted, through the rooms they fling,
Like oxen madden'd by the breeze's sting,
When sultry days, and long, succeed the gentle spring.

v. 335. *Like oxen*, etc.] The fury of the battle being now over, Homer pauses with the action; and letting his fancy rove in search of foreign ornaments, beautifies and enlivens the horrors of it with two similitudes, drawn from subjects very distant from the terrors they are brought to illustrate. The former of an herd of cattle, represents the confusion and affright of the suitors; the latter of the birds, their weakness and unavailing flight. The gadfly shews the fury and close pursuit of Ulysses and his assistants, the hawks their courage, and superior power. Eustathius.

Virgil at large describes this breeze fly. Georg. 3.

About th' Alburnian groves, with holly green,
Of winged insects mighty swarms are seen:
This flying plague, to mark its quality,
Oestros the Grecians call, Asylus, we:
A fierce loud buzzing breeze; their stings draw blood;
And drive the cattle gadding through the wood,
Seiz'd with unusual pains they loudly cry, *etc.* Dryd.

This description shews that this is no ill-chosen similitude; it very well paints the suitors flying in an herd, and Ulysses wounding them as they fly.

The latter simile from the hawks, affords some curiosity in regard to the antient manner of that sport. It is evident, says Dacier, that this passage is an instance, that flying of birds of prey, in the nature of our hawking was practised by the ancients: the nets called by Homer νέφεα, were fixed in the plain ground; the fowlers, with their

Not half so keen, fierce vulturs of the chace
Stoop from the mountains on the feather'd race.

falcons, took their ſtation upon the adjoining eminences; when the birds, driven from this riſing ground, flew to the plain, they met with the nets, and endeavouring to eſcape them, crouded into flocks; then the hawk, or vultur, was looſed, and deſcending upon his prey, ſlew them in multitudes; for the birds were incapable of reſiſting, and at the ſame time were afraid of the nets, and therefore could not eſcape: this is the reaſon why the fowlers are ſaid to rejoice at the ſport: a plain indication, that the poet intended to deſcribe the ſportman's flying his bird at the prey. That the word *νέφεα* ſignifies *nets*, is evident from Ariſtophanes, *μὰ νεφέλας, μὰ δίκτυα*, that is, *I ſwear by my nets*: Heſychius is of the ſame opinion, *νέφεα*, ſays that author, ſignifies the *clouds*, *καὶ λίνα θηρατικά*, *hunters nets*. Euſtathius directly affirms, that in his time this ſport was practiſed in many countries; and the place where the nets were fixed was called *νεφελοσασία*. That author conſtrues theſe words *νέφεα πλώσασαι, ἴενται*, as if *ἐπὶ* were to be underſtood, to expreſs the ruſhing of the birds againſt the net; but there is no occaſion for this violence to the text, for by joining *νέφεα* with *πλώσασαι*, the period will be plain, and ſignify, that thro' fear of the net they fly with violence to avoid it. M. Dacier has a pretty obſervation upon this ſport; and ſhews us that the ancients were uſed to take even deer with nets, by flying at them birds of prey, in conformity to this deſcription of Homer: this is manifeſt from a paſſage in Arrian, l. 2. c. 1. where he ſpeaks of men placing their fears where they have nothing to fear: *Λοιπὸν ἡμεῖς τὸ τῶν ἐλάφων πάσχομεν ὅτε φοβεῖνται φεύγουσαι ἀι ἔλαφοι τὰ πτηνὰ, πῇ τρέπονται; καὶ πρὸς τινὰ (τόπον) ἀναχωρῆσιν ὡς ἀσφαλῆ; πρὸς τὰ δίκτυα, καὶ οὕτως ἀπόλλυνται, ἐναλλάξασαι τὰ φοβερὰ καὶ τὰ θαρραλέα*; "For what "remains, we are like deer, for they fearing the birds; "that are flown at them, what courſe do they take? to

When the wide field extended ſnares beſet,
With conſcious dread they ſhun the quiv'ring net:
No help, no flight; but wounded ev'ry way,
Headlong they drop: the fowlers ſeize the prey.
On all ſides thus they double wound on wound,
In proſtrate heaps the wretches beat the ground,
Unmanly ſhrieks precede each dying grone,
And a red deluge floats the reeking ſtone.
Leiodes firſt before the victor falls:
The wretched augur thus for mercy calls;

" what place of refuge do they run to be in ſecurity? to " the nets, and ſo periſh, miſtaking their dangers for their greateſt ſafety." Minerva, in this ſimilitude, is the bird of prey deſcending from the mountain, for ſhe it is who ſcatters the ſuitors by diſplaying her Ægis from the roof of the palace: this is the opinion of Euſtathius: but in the winding up of the compariſon, Homer plainly by the vultur denotes Ulyſſes and his aſſiſtants (tho' perhaps not excluſively of the goddeſs) for in the application he writes,

Ὡς ἄρα τοὶ μνηστῆρες ἐπεσσύμενοι κατὰ δῶμα
Τύπτον.———

v. 347. *Leiodes firſt before the victor falls:*
The wretched augur———]

This Leiodes is the laſt perſon who ſurvives of the ſuitors; he was an augur and a prophet, and ought therefore to have followed wiſer counſels: he tells Ulyſſes that he endeavoured to reſtrain the ſuitors from their inſolence; but he himſelf aſpired to the bed of Penelope, and conſequently was an aſſociate in their conſpiracies. Leiodes falls without reſiſtance; and indeed it would have been very improper to have repreſented him encountering Ulyſſes in a ſingle combat, when above an hundred had not been able to ſtand before him: beſides, fighting is out of the cha-

O gracious hear, nor let thy ſuppliant bleed:
Still undiſhonour'd or by word or deed
Thy houſe, for me, remains; by me repreſs'd
Full oft was check'd th' injuſtice of the reſt:
Averſe they heard me when I counſell'd well,
Their hearts were harden'd, and they juſtly fell.
Oh ſpare an augur's conſecrated head.
Nor add the blameleſs to the guilty dead.
Prieſt as thou art! for that deteſted band
Thy lying prophecies deceiv'd the land:
Againſt Ulyſſes have thy vows been made;
For them, thy daily oriſons were paid:
Yet more, ev'n to our bed thy pride aſpires:
One common crime one common fate requires.
Thus ſpeaking, from the ground the ſword he took
Which Agelaus' dying hand forſook;
Full through his neck the weighty faulchion ſped:
Along the pavement roll'd the mutt'ring head.
Phemius alone the hand of vengeance ſpar'd,
Phemius the ſweet, the heav'n inſtructed bard,
Beſide the gate the rev'rend minſtrel ſtands;
The lyre, now ſilent, trembling in his hands;
Dubious to ſupplicate the chief, or fly
To Jove's inviolable altar nigh,

racter of Leiodes; he was not a man of the ſword, but an augur: it would therefore have been contrary to his function, to have drawn him engaging Ulyſſes; and conſequently it is with great propriety that he is deſcribed falling not as a warrior, but as a ſuppliant.

v. 372. *Dubious——if to fly*
To Jove's inviolable altar nigh, etc.]

Where oft Laertes holy vows had paid,
And oft Ulysses smoaking victims laid.

This altar of Jupiter Hercæus stood in the palace-yard; so called from ἕρκος, *the out-wall enclosing the court yard*. It stood in the open air, where they sacrificed to Jupiter the guardian, or protector; and within the palace to Ζεὺς ἑρκεῖος.

Jupiter was worshipped under the same name by the Romans. Thus Ovid.

Cui nihil Hercæi profuit ara Jovis.

The altar mentioned by Virgil, Æn. 2 was of the same nature: to which Priam fled at the taking of Troy.

Uncover'd but by heav'n, there stood in view
An altar; near the hearth a lawrel grew,
Dodder'd with age; whose boughs encompass'd round
The houshold gods, and shed the holy ground.

These altars were places of sanctuary, and by flying to them the person was thought to be under the immediate protection of the deity, and therefore in some cases inviolable. The same practice prevailed among the Jews; for we find frequently in the scriptures, that it was customary to fly to the altar as to a place of refuge, which is evident from the expression of laying hold on the horns of the altar. This is the reason why Phemius entertains an intention to fly to the altar of Jupiter Hercæus. Plutarch in his treatise upon music, informs us, that Demodocus was reported to have wrote a poem, intitled, *The destruction of Troy*: and Phemius another, called, *The return of the Grecian captains*: but by these poets, Homer probably means only himself, who was author of two poems, the Iliad and Odyssey. Homer, remarks Eustathius, plainly shews us the notion he had of the great qualifications that were necessary to form a good poet. He must sing of men and gods; that is, be thoroughly ac-

His honour'd harp with care he first set down, 375
Between the laver and the silver throne:

quainted with all things, both human and divine; he must be αὐτοδίδακτος, or *self-taught*; that is, as we express it, he must be a genius; he must have a natural ability, which is indeed to be improved, but not capable of being learned by study: he adds, that besides this felicity of nature, he must have an heavenly inspiration: this implies that he must have a kind of enthusiasm, an elevation of soul which is not to be obtained by labour and industry, and consequently is the gift of heaven. Thus Pindar,

——σοφὸς ὁ πολ-
λὰ εἰδὼς φυᾷ.
Μαθόντες δὲ, λάβροι
Παγλωσσία, κορακες ὣς,
Ἀκραντα γαρύετον.

The bards, whom true poetic flame inspires,
Receive from nature more than human fires;
In vain from arts alone they tune the voice,
Like crows they croak, nor is it song, but noise.

This is the *mens divinior* of Horace; by industry men may become great scholars and philosophers; but no man was ever a great poet, without being in the strictest sense a great genius. I will only add, that Aristotle in his Rhet. 1. 7. quotes this hemistic αὐτοδίδακτος, *etc.* as an instance that natural are more excellent than acquired abilities; he gives the reason of it; namely, because they are more uncommon, and not obtained by human industry. Maximus Tyrius has a criticism upon it. How, objects that author, can it be said, that the poet is self-taught, if the gods teach him to sing? The answer is easy, Homer means, that he has no human instructor, and only opposes natural to acquired abilities. It is observable, that Maximus Tyrius erroneously quotes the verse, Dissert. 22. for he writes, Θεὸς δὲ μοὶ ἅπασαν ὁμφὴν, instead of

Then proſtrate ſtretch'd before the dreadful man,
Perſuaſive, thus, with accent ſoft began.
O king! to mercy be thy ſoul inclin'd,
And ſpare the poet's ever-gentle kind.
A deed like this thy future fame would wrong,
For dear to gods and men is ſacred ſong.
Self-taught I ſing; by heav'n and heav'n alone
The genuine ſeeds of poeſy are ſown;
And (what the gods beſtow) the lofty lay,
To gods alone, and godlike worth, we pay.
Save then the poet, and thyſelf reward;
'Tis thine to merit, mine is to record;
That here I ſung, was force and not deſire;
This hand reluctant touch'd the warbling wire:
And let thy ſon atteſt, nor ſordid pay
Nor ſervile flatt'ry ſtain'd the moral lay.
The moving words Telemachus attends,
His ſire approaches, and the bard defends.
O mix not, father, with thoſe impious dead
The man divine; forbear that ſacred head;

———Θεὸς δέ μοι ἐν φρεσὶν οἵμας
Παντοίας ἐνέφυσεν———

He likewiſe puts the words in the mouth of Demodocus, which are here ſpoken by Phemius; he undoubtedly quoted by memory.

What Homer adds after all this, to raiſe the character of his poet, is very remarkably moral. That he never turned his talents to flattery, nor was it voluntarily that he ſerved or entertained unworthy men, but was merely compelled to it by their violence.

Medon the herald too our arms may ſpare,
Medon, who made my infancy his care;
If yet he breathes, permit thy ſon to give
Thus much to gratitude, and bid him live.
Beneath a table, trembling with diſmay,
Couch'd cloſe to earth, unhappy Medon lay,
Wrapt in a new ſlain oxe's ample hide:
Swift at the word he caſt his ſkreen aſide,
Sprung to the prince, embrac'd his knee with tears,
And thus with grateful voice addreſs'd his ears:
O prince! O friend! lo here thy Medon ſtands;
Ah ſtop the hero's unreſiſted hands,
Incens'd too juſtly by that impious brood,
Whoſe guilty glories now are ſet in blood.
To whom Ulyſſes with a pleaſing eye:
Be bold, on friendſhip and my ſon rely;
Live, an example for the world to read,
How much more ſafe the good than evil deed:

v. 413 *Live, an example for the world to read*
How much more ſafe the good than evil deed.]
The moral intended to be taught by the fable of the Odyſſey is, to ſhew virtue though long in diſtreſs, at length triumphant; and vice, though long ſucceſsful, unfortunate in the concluſion: it is to this effect that Ulyſſes here ſpeaks; and to give his words more weight he throws them into a ſentence. It is with excellent judgment that it is here placed by Homer: the puniſhment is no ſooner over but Ulyſſes declares the equity of it; he ſpeaks to all mankind, and lays it down as an univerſal truth that virtue is to be preferred before vice, and invites us to the practice of the former, by ſhewing the ſucceſs of it in his own victory; and deters us from the latter, by repreſent-

Thou, with the heav'n-taught bard, in peace resort
From blood and carnage to yon open court:
Me other work requires——With tim'rous awe
From the dire scence th'exempted two withdraw,
Scarce sure of life, look round, and trembling move
To the bright altars of protector Jove.

Mean while Ulysses search'd the dome, to find
If yet there live of all th' offending kind.
Not one! compleat the bloody tale he found,
All steep'd in blood, all gasping on the ground.
So, when by hollow shores the fisher-train
Sweep with their arching nets the hoary main,
And scarce the meshy toils the copious draught contain,

ing the ill consequences of it in the destruction of the suitors.

v. 425. *So, when by hollow shores the fisher train*
Sweep with their arching nets the hoary main.]
The ancients, remarks Eustathius, observed, that this is the only place where Homer manifestly speaks of catching fish with nets; for these words, lib. 5. v. 595. of the Iliad,

——————and sweep away
Sons, sires, and wives, an undistinguish'd prey;

which, in the Greek, is expressed by ἀψῖσι λίνα ἁλοῦσι πανάγρους, may be applied to the taking of beasts or birds by nets, and consequently ought not to be appropriated to fishing. Thus it is evident that this art was practised very antiently amongst the Grecians: it was likewise known early to the Hebrews and Ægyptians. Thus Isaiah xix. 8. "The fishers (of Ægypt) shall mourn, all they "that cast the angle into the brook shall lament, and they "that spread nets upon the waters shall languish." And that they fished the seas with nets is evident from Ezek.

All naked of their element, and bare,
The fishes pant, and gasp in thinner air;
Wide o'er the sands are spread the stiff 'ning prey,
'Till the warm sun exhales their foul away."

And now the king commands his son to call
Old Eurycléa, to the deathful hall:
The son observant not a moment stays;
The aged governess with speed obeys:
The sounding portals instant they display;
The matron moves, the prince directs the way.
On heaps of death the stern Ulysses stood,
All black with dust, and cover'd thick with blood.
So the grim lion from the slaughter comes,
Dreadful he glares, and terribly he foams,

xxvi. 5. "It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in "the midst of the sea." The comparison is very just; and the last line of it gives a peculiar honour and distinction to Ulysses: that hero is the sun who kills the suitors, in application of the similitude.

v. 440. *So the grim lion*, etc.] Eustathius agrees with an observation which has been made concerning the similitudes of the Odyssey, lib. 16. He here remarks, that comparisons are as rare in the Odyssey as they are frequent in the Iliad; and that the difference arises from the difference of the subjects: the subject of the Iliad is great, and therefore properly illustrated by noble images, and a variety of sublime comparisons; the subject of the Odyssey requires to be related in a less exalted stile, and with greater simplicity. This book is an undeniable testimony of the truth of this observation: the story of it approaches nearer to the nature of the Iliad than any other book of the Odyssey, and we find it more adorned with comparisons than almost all the rest of the poem.

His breaſt with marks of carnage painted o'er
His jaws all dropping with the bull's black gore.
Soon as her eyes the welcome object met,
The guilty fall'n, the mighty deed compleat:
A ſcream of joy her feeble voice eſſay'd:
The hero check'd her, and compos'dly ſaid.
Woman, experienc'd as thou art, controul
Indecent joy, and feaſt thy ſecret ſoul.
T' inſult the dead is cruel and unjuſt;
Fate, and their crime, have ſunk them to the duſt;

v. 450. *T' inſult the dead is cruel and unjuſt.*] The word in the original is ὀλόλυζα, and here ſignifies a *voice of joy*. In other places it is uſed to denote a *ſorrowful lamentation*. See note 49. of the third Odyſſey. I am wonderfully pleaſed with the noble ſentiment of Ulyſſes contained in theſe lines. It is full of piety and humanity: good-nature feels for the ſufferings of any of its fellow-creatures. Even in puniſhment we are to remember, that thoſe we puniſh are men, and inflict it as a neceſſary juſtice, not as a triumph. Such here is the conduct of Ulyſſes; he is ſo far from rejoicing in his ſucceſs, that he reſtrains others from it; and ſeems to be a mourner at the funeral of his enemies. He falls into the ſame thought with Job xxxi. 29. "If I rejoiced at the deſtruction of "him that hated me, or lifted up myſelf when evil found "him, if I ſuffered my mouth to ſin, by wiſhing a curſe "to his ſoul, *etc.*"

Were a prince, who makes war for glory, to ſtand upon a field of battle immediately after victory, amidſt the horrors of the dead, and the groans of the dying; it would ſurely mortify his ambition to ſee ſuch horrible monuments of his glory. If the death of thouſands of brave men were weighed in a ſcale againſt a name, a popular empty breath of a multitude, and if reaſon held the balance, how eaſily would the diſproportion be diſcovered!

Nor heeded these the censure of mankind,
The good and bad were equal in their mind.
Justly the price of worthlessness they paid,
And each now wails an unlamented shade.
But thou sincere! Oh Euryclea, say,
What maids dishonour us, and what obey?

Then she: In these thy kingly walls remain
(My son) full fifty of the handmaid train,
Taught by my care to cull the fleece, or weave,
And servitude with pleasing tasks deceive;
Of these, twice six pursue their wicked way,
Nor me nor chaste Penelope obey;

v. 453. *The good and bad were equal in their mind.*] There is some obscurity in these words, "they neither "respected the good nor the bad man;" or, as Homer expresses it,

Οὐ κακὸν ὄδε μὲν ἐσθλὸν.

A reverence is due to a good man, and consequently it is a crime to deny it; but why should it be objected to the suitors as a fault that they despised the bad man, whose actions deserve to be despised? Eustathius answers, κακος may signify ταπεινος, or a person of a low condition, the poor man, or the stranger; and this justifies the assertion: but perhaps the poet uses it to shew that they despised and outraged all men universally without distinction, whether persons of probity or dishonesty; they considered not the condition of others, but were insolent to all mankind.

v. 462. *Of these, twice six pursue their wicked way.*] It is remarkable, observes monsieur Bayle, that of fifty women, so few as twelve only should yield to the desires of the suitors. But it is not indeed affirmed, that the rest were ever tempted by any importunities. Plutarch, in

Nor fits it that Telemachus command
(Young as he is) his mother's female band.
Hence to the upper chambers let me fly,
Where slumbers soft now close the royal eye;
There wake her with the news——The matron cry'd;
Not so (Ulysses more sedate reply'd)

his treatise of Education, informs us, that Bion wittily applied this passage to the study of the sciences: when the suitors failed in their attempts upon Penelope, they condescended to address her maids: so men who are not capable of understanding philosophy, busy themselves with studies of no value.

v. 464. *Nor fits it that Telemachus command*
(Young as he is) his mother's female band.] This, remarks Eustathius, is an instance of the maternal wisdom of Penelope; and, at the same time, a vindication of Telemachus, for not restraining the insolence and immodesty of these female servants; they were out of his jurisdiction, and immediately under the protection of Penelope. But is not this removal of the fault from Telemachus, an imputation upon the queen? and if the son wanted an excuse for not punishing their crimes, is the mother unblameable, who not only permits the disorder of their lives, but forbids Telemachus to redress it? Is it to be supposed that this chaste matron was more indulgent to female frailty than Telemachus? The true reason is, Telemachus could not, and Penelope durst not, shew a just resentment against these criminals: they had too great an interest in the chief of the suitors to stand in awe of the queen, or fear her vengeance. This is evident, for Penelope herself was, in a great measure, in their power, and the same authority that supported the suitors in their insolence against the queen, would support these females against her revenge for their immodesty.

v. 469. *Not so (Ulysses more sedate reply'd)*] Ulysses gives this injunction, because he is unwilling to wound the

Bring first the crew who wrought these guilty deeds.
In haste the matron parts: the king proceeds.
Now to dispose the dead, the care remains
To you, my son, and you, my faithful swains;
Th' offending females to that task we doom,
To wash, to scent, and purify the room.
These (ev'ry table cleans'd, and ev'ry throne,
And all the melancholy labour done)

eyes of Penelope with a spectacle of such horror as the dead bodies and blood of the suitors. It was indeed necessary to find some reasonable pretext for not introducing the queen immediately; this might be expected from the fondness and affection of an husband towards a beloved wife, and therefore Ulysses makes even his fondness for her a reason why he delays his discovery, namely, his care not to grieve her with such a terrible scene of slaughter: besides, the death of the female servants is to succeed, and it would have been indecent to have made her assisting or present at their execution. The poet reaps a further advantage from this conduct; for by it he introduces the discovery to Penelope, in a time of leisure, and finds an opportunity to describe, at large, that surprizing and tender incident.

v. 477.——*the melancholy labour done,*
Drive to yon' court———]

It would, in these ages, observes Dacier, be thought barbarous in a king to command his son to perform an execution of so much horror: but antiently it was thought no dishonour: thus in the scriptures Gideon having taken Zeba and Salmana, two Midian kings, commands his son to kill them with the sword in his presence: but, continues that author, I wish Homer had deviated from that custom, that he had given both Ulysses and Telemachus sentiments of more humanity, and spared his reader a description of such a terrible execution. I am not delighted

Drive to yon' court, without the palace wall,
There the revenging ſword ſhall ſmite them all;
So with the ſuitors let them mix in duſt,
Stretch'd in a long oblivion of their luſt.
He ſaid: the lamentable train appear,
Each vents a groan, and drops a tender tear;
Each heav'd her mournful burden, and beneath
The porch depos'd the ghaſtly heaps of death.
The chief ſevere, compelling each to move,
Urg'd the dire taſk imperious from above.
With thirſty ſponge they rub the tables o'er,
(The ſwains unite their toil) the walls, the floor
Waſh'd with th' effuſive wave, are purg'd of gore.

with any thing that has a tendency to inhumanity more than that lady; but it may be anſwered, that Homer was obliged to write according to the cuſtom of the age. Virgil has aſcribed an act more cruel to the pious Æneas, who ſacrifices ſeveral unfortunate young men who were his captives, Æn. 11. v. 15.

Then, pinion'd with their hands behind, appear
Th' unhappy captives, marching in the rear;
Appointed off'rings in the victor's name,
To ſprinkle with their blood the funeral flame. Dryd.

This act is to be aſcribed to the manner of the age, and the cuſtoms of war in the days of Æneas, and not to his inhumanity: but here it may ſeem eſſential to the very nature of epic poetry to relate this act of juſtice: the moral of it is, to ſee the good rewarded and the wicked puniſhed, in the concluſion of the fable. Theſe criminals had been as guilty in their ſeveral capacities as the ſuitors themſelves; it was therefore neceſſary that their puniſhment ſhould be ſet before the reader, as well as that of the ſuitors.

Once more the palace set in fair array,
To the base court the females take their way;
There compass'd close between the dome and wall,
(Their life's last scene) they trembling wait their fall.

Then thus the prince. To these shall we afford
A fate so pure, as by the martial sword?
To these, the nightly prostitutes to shame,
And base revilers of our house and name?

Thus speaking on the circling wall he strung
A ship's tough cable, from a column hung;
Near the high top he strain'd it strongly round,
Whence no contending foot could reach the ground.
Their heads above, connected in a row,
They beat the air with quiv'ring feet below:
Thus on some tree hung struggling in the snare,
The doves or thrushes flap their wings in air.
Soon fled the soul impure, and left behind
The empty corse to waver with the wind.

v. 505. *Thus on some tree hung struggling in the snare.*] Nothing can better represent to us the image of these sufferers than this similitude of a bird taken by the neck in a gin or snare. Hobbes in his version has omitted it; and Dacier has abridged the whole description.

Eustathius is pleasant upon the death of these wantons. What a certain person, says he, once spoke of a fig tree, on which his clamorous wife had hanged herself, viz. "I "wish all trees bore such fruit;" may be applied to those ropes, "It were to be wished that all nooses could catch "such birds." This remark has escaped the notice of madam Dacier; because the race of clamorous women has been long extinct, and therefore there was no occasion to prescribe a remedy for a disease unknown to these happy ages.

Then forth they led Melanthius, and began
Their bloody work: they lopp'd away the man,
Morsel for dogs! then trimm'd with brazen sheers
The wretch, and shorten'd of his nose and ears;
His hands and feet last felt the cruel steel:
He roar'd, and torments gave his soul to hell——
They wash, and to Ulysses take their way,
So ends the bloody business of the day.
To Eurycles then addrest the king:
Bring hither fire, and hither sulphur bring,
To purge the palace: then the queen attend,
And let her, with her matron train, descend;
The matron-train, with all the virgin-band,
Assemble here, to learn their lord's command.
Then Eurycles; joyful I obey,
But cast those mean dishonest rags away;
Permit me first thy royal robes to bring:
Ill suits this garb the shoulders of a king.
"Bring sulphur strait and fire (the monarch cries)
She hears, and at the word obedient flies.

v. 527. *Bring sulphur strait and fire*———] The reason why Ulysses orders sulphur to be brought, is, because every thing was thought to be polluted by a dead body, and he uses it by way of purification. The same opinion prevailed amongst the Hebrews as well as Greeks, as the scriptures inform us. Thus also in Job it is said, "Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation," xviii. 15. which is thought to allude to this custom. Livy mentions this practice amongst the Romans, lib. 30. c. 15. *Habet et in religionibus locum ad expiandas suffitu domus.*

Homer describes the female servants descending with

With fire and ſurphur, cure of noxious fumes,
He purg'd the walls and blood-polluted rooms.
Again the matron ſprings with eager pace,
And ſpreads her lord's return from place to place.
They hear, ruſh forth, and inſtant round him ſtand,
A gazing throng, a torch in ev'ry hand.
They ſaw, they knew him, and with fond embrace
Each humbly kiſt his knee, or hand, or face;
He knows them all; in all ſuch truth appears,
Ev'n he indulges the ſweet joy of tears.

torches; this is done to ſhew the exact time of the action of this book, which is comprehended in the evening of the fortieth day.

Ulyſſes forbids Euryclea to bring a better garment: this little particularity is inſerted with judgment; for the diſguiſe of Ulyſſes in the garb of a beggar contributes to increaſe the incredulity of Penelope, and conſequently to all thoſe doubts and fears, and that ſtruggle between the love of a husband and the dread of an impoſtor, which are the ſubject of the ſucceeding book.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XXIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Eurycleа awakes Penelope with the news of Ulyſſes's return, and the death of the ſuitors. Penelope ſcarcely credits her, but ſuppoſes ſome god has puniſhed them, and deſcends from her apartment in doubt. At the firſt interview of Ulyſſes and Penelope, ſhe is quite unſatisfied. Minerva reſtores him to the beauty of his youth; but the queen continues incredulous, till by ſome, circumſtances ſhe is convinced, and falls into all the tranſports of paſſion and tenderneſs. They recount to each other all that has paſt during their long ſeparation. The next morning Ulyſſes, arming himſelf and his friends, goes from the city to viſit his father.

THEN to the queen, as in repoſe ſhe lay,
The nurſe, with eager rapture, ſpeeds her way;
The tranſports of her faithful heart ſupply
A ſudden youth, and give her wings to fly.

This book contains the diſcovery of Ulyſſes to Penelope. Monſieur Rapin is very ſevere upon ſome parts of it; whoſe objections I ſhall here recite.

The diſcovery of Ulyſſes to his queen was the moſt favourable occaſion imaginable for the poet to give us ſome of the niceſt touches of his art; but as he has managed it, it has nothing but faint and weak ſurprizes, cold and languiſhing aſtoniſhments, and very little of that delicacy and

And sleeps my child? the rev'rend matron cries: 5
Ulysses lives! arise, my child, arise!

exquisiteness which ought to express a conjugal tenderness: he leaves his wife too long in doubt and distrust, and she is too cautious and circumspect; the formalities she observes in being fully assured, and her care to act with security, are set down in number and measure, lest she should fall into any mistake; and this particularity makes the story dull, in a place that so much requires briskness and liveliness. Ought not the secret instinct of her love to have inspired her with other sentiments? and should not her heart have told her, what her eyes could not? Love is penetrating, and whispers more to us than the senses can convey; but Homer understood not this philosophy: Virgil who makes Dido foresee that Æneas designs to leave her, would have made better advantage of this favourable opportunity.

The strength of this objection consists chiefly in the long incredulity of Penelope, and the slowness she uses to make an undeniable discovery: this Rapin judges to be contrary to the passion of love, and consequently that the poet writes unnaturally.

There is somewhat of the Frenchman in this criticism: Homer, in his opinion, wants vivacity; and if Rapin had been to have drawn Ulysses, we had seen him all transport and extasy. But where there is most fancy, there is often the least judgment. Penelope thought Ulysses to be dead; he had been absent twenty years: and through absence and his present disguise, he was another person from that Ulysses whom she knew, when he sailed to Troy; so that he was become an absolute stranger. From this observation we may appeal to the reader's judgment, if Penelope, without full conviction, ought to be persuaded that this person was the real Ulysses? And how could she be convinced, but by asking many questions, and descending to particularities, which must necessarily occasion delay in the discovery? If indeed Ulysses and Penelope had met

At length appears the long-expected hour!
Ulyſſes comes! The ſuitors are no more!

after a ſhorter abſence, when one view would have aſſured her that he was her real huſband, then too much tranſport could not have been expreſſed by the poet: but this is not the caſe, ſhe is firſt to know her huſband, before ſhe could or ought to expreſs her fondneſs for his return, otherwiſe ſhe might be in danger of miſplacing it upon an impoſtor: but ſhe is no ſooner convinced that Ulyſſes is actually returned, but ſhe receives him with as much fondneſs as can be expreſſed, or as Rapin could require.

While yet he ſpeaks, her pow'rs of life decay,
She ſickens, trembles, falls, and faints away:
At length recov'ring, to his arms ſhe flew,
And ſtrain'd him cloſe, as to his breaſt ſhe grew.

Till this moment the diſcovery was not evidently made, and her paſſion would have been unſeaſonable; but this is no ſooner done, but ſhe falls into an agony of affection. If ſhe had here appeared cool and indifferent, there had been weight in Rapin's objections. Beſides, Ariſtotle informs us, there was a play, called, *The falſe Ulyſſes*: it was formed upon a ſtory of a perſon who deſigned to ſurprize Penelope, and told her, that he was her huſband; and to confirm it, pretended to remember a bow, which he uſed before he went to the ſiege of Troy. This ſhews that Penelope had been in danger from impoſtors, and it is therefore very prudent in her to be upon the guard, and not to yield without full conviction.

But there is a diſpute of a different nature mentioned by monſieur Bayle; namely, whether if Penelope had yielded to an impoſtor believing him to be really Ulyſſes, ſhe had been guilty of adultery? Monſieur Baſnage thus argues: 'Let us ſuppoſe a wife tranſported with love for 'an huſband, running eagerly to the perſon ſhe miſtakes 'for him: this woman has no deſign to be deceived, one

No more they view the golden light of day;
Arise, and bless thee with the glad survey!

' cannot blame her ardour; it is lawful, if he proves her ' real husband: in short, her ignorance is involuntary, and ' occasioned solely by a laudable passion for her husband: ' yet, if this person prove an adulterer, is the wife entire- ' ly excusable? ought her eagerness and precipitation to give ' her no uneasiness? undoubtedly it ought, because she is ' supposed to act precipitatly, without a full examination: ' her passion is stronger than her reason, and therefore she ' is blameable.' The author of the general critique on Maimbourg is more indulgent: he judges that if a woman does not refuse a strict examination out of a blameable motive, she is excusable, though she happens to oblige an impostor. ' If a wife, deceived by the resemblance be- ' tween her husband and an impostor, shall allow the lat- ' ter all the privileges of the marriage-bed, this action is ' no stain to her chastity; and the husband would be the ' most unreasonable creature breathing, should he blame it ' as a breach of conjugal fidelity, provided she is no way ' accessary to the imposition.' So that, according to this author, tho' the wife is betrayed by her precipitation, yet she is to be accounted innocent; because the precipitation is occasioned by a vehemence of love for her husband. But I fear few husbands who should take their wives in such circumstances would excuse them, or believe that they had used due circumspection. In short, monsieur Bayle rightly decides the question, by saying, that every person who acts precipitatly, is culpable; and that no person can act rationally, without a full and satisfactory examination. And indeed, if this rule were observed there would scarce be any room for the aforesaid supposition. The resemblance between man and man is never so perfect, but the difference upon a strict observation is discernible: we may therefore conclude, that a wife who should suffer such a deceit, was not very unwilling to be deceived; especially when there must be between a man and his wife a thousand

Touch'd at her words, the mournful queen rejoin'd,
Ah! whither wanders thy diſtemper'd mind?
The righteous Pow'rs who tread the ſtarry ſkies,
The weak enlighten, and confound the wiſe,

particularities, which could be only known to the wife and husband, which, upon a due ſcrutiny, would diſcover the impoſture.

I fear I ſhall be tedious to the reader, by mentioning another difficulty, of a ſimilar nature, ſtarted by Seneca. 'If any perſon ſhould make an aſſignation with his own 'wife in diſguiſe, ſuppoſing her to be the wife of ano-'ther perſon, would he be guilty of adultery?' He anſwers in the affirmative; though the wife herſelf would be innocent; for he is guilty intentionally. This may be illuſtrated by the example of Jacob, who was blameleſs when he was deceived by Leah, who perſonated his wife Rachel; but Leah was culpable, though Jacob was innocent, for ſhe very well knew that ſhe was not wife to Jacob. But this is the province of a caſuiſt, not of a commentator.

v. 6. *Ulyſſes lives!——Ulyſſes comes!*] In the Greek it is literally, *Ulyſſes is come, he is at length come to his palace.* This laſt circumſtance is not a tautology; obſerves Euſtathius, a perſon may be returned to his country, and yet never arrive at his family: thus Agamemnon reached his dominions in ſafety, but was aſſaſſinated before he came to his palace. We may obſerve in general, that Euryclea and Penelope, through their whole conference, ſpeak with brevity; Homer was too good a judge of human nature to repreſent them ſpeaking with prolixity. Paſſion is always in haſte, and delivers itſelf with precipitation; and this is very well painted in this interview: Euryclea is in a tranſport of joy for the return of Ulyſſes, and Penelope has all her affections awakened at the news of it.

And human thought, with unreſiſted ſway,
Depreſs or raiſe, enlarge or take away:
Truth by their high decree, thy voice forſakes,
And folly, with the tongue of wiſdom ſpeaks.
Unkind, the fond illuſion to impoſe!
Was it to flatter, or deride my woes?
Never did I a ſleep ſo ſweet enjoy,
Since my dear lord left Ithaca for Troy:
Why muſt I wake to grieve, and curſe thy ſhore?
O Troy—may never tongue pronounce thee more?

v. 13. *The righteous Pow'rs who tread the ſtarry ſkies,*
The weak enlighten, and confound the wiſe.] This is an admirable ſentiment: it is conſonant to many expreſſions in the holy ſcriptures. God is the Lord of ſpirits, and gives and takes away as ſeems beſt to his infinite wiſdom. The thoughts of man, as well as his life, are equally in the power of the Almighty.

v. 21. *Never did I a ſleep ſo ſweet enjoy*, etc.] Homer, obſerves Euſtathius, very judiciouſly mentions this profound ſleep of Penelope; for it might have been thought improbable, that ſhe ſhould not wake at the noiſe and confuſion of the battle. It was ſolely to reconcile it to credibility, that in a preceding book, Pallas was introduced to throw her into it: beſides, the womens apartment was always in the upper part of the houſe, and was from thence called ὑπερῷον: and conſequently Penelope was at a ſufficient diſtance from the place of the combat, and may be eaſily ſuppoſed not to be waked by it.

The circumſtance of Penelope's not being awaked by the cries of the ſuitors, furniſhes us with a reaſon why they are not heard by the Ithacans that lived near the palace: for if ſhe who is within the palace is not diſturbed by the noiſe, it is credible enough, that the Greeks, who lived at ſome diſtance from the palace, ſhould not hear it.

Be gone: another might have felt our rage,
But age is sacred, and we spare thy age.
To whom with warmth: My soul a lie disdains;
Ulysses lives, thy own Ulysses reigns:
That stranger, patient of the suitors wrongs,
And the rude licence of ungovern'd tongues,
He, he is thine! thy son, his latent guest
Long knew, but lock'd the secret in his breast;
With well-concerted art to end his woes,
And burst at once in vengeance of the foes.
While yet she spoke, the queen in transport sprung
Swift from the couch, and round the matron hung;

v. 35.——*The queen in transport sprung*
Swift from the couch——]

We are not to gather from this transport of Penelope, that she is fully convinced of the return of Ulysses: she is yet incredulous; but she must have been insensible if she had continued unmoved at the mention of the arrival of an husband, whose return has been described through the whole Odyssey as the chief object of all her desires. Besides, she receives the death of the suitors with joy; she cannot disbelieve the testimony of Euryclea concerning their deaths; but thinking it impossible that they should be slain by any one person, she ascribes their destruction not to Ulysses, but a deity. But then is not such a supposition extravagant? and can it be reconciled to probability, that a god should really be supposed to descend to work their destruction? It may be answered, that the excess of the assertion ought to be ascribed to the excess of joy in the speaker: Penelope is in a transport, and no wonder if she speaks with amplification: she judges it impossible that such a great event should be wrought by a mortal hand; and it is therefore very natural, while she is un-

Fast from her eye descends the rolling tear,
Say, once more say, is my Ulysses here?
How could that numerous and outragious band
By one be slain, though by an hero's hand?
I saw it not, she cries, but heard alone,
When death was busy, a loud dying groan;
The damsel train turn'd pale at every wound,
Immur'd we sate, and catch'd each passing sound;
When death had seiz'd her prey, thy son attends,
And at his nod the damsel train descends;
There terrible in arms Ulysses stood,
And the dead suitors almost swam in blood;
Thy heart had leap'd the hero to survey,
Stern as the surly lion o'er his prey,

der a surprize, and her thoughts raised above the bounds of calm reason, to ascribe it to a deity.

It has been believed, that all the notions of good and bad dæmons that prevailed among the ancients were borrowed from truth, and that they received them by tradition from the offices of good and bad angels: if I might be allowed to make this supposition, then what Penelope here speaks may be reconciled to strict verity; then we may find a reason why she may, without extravagance, ascribe the suitors deaths to a dæmon, or deity. Thus, 2 Kings, cap. xix. v. 35. *That night the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand.* If this supposition be thought disallowable, the former will be a sufficient vindication. I will only add, that the poet artfully turns the incredulity of Penelope to the praise of Ulysses; the exploit was so great, that no mortal was brave enough to perform it; it must therefore be wrought by a god: but this god is at length discovered to be Ulysses.

Glorious in gore!——now with ſulphureous fires,
The dome he purges, now the flame aſpires;
Heap'd lie the dead without the palace walls,——
Haſte, daughter, haſte, thy own Ulyſſes calls!
Thy every wiſh the bounteous gods beſtow,
Enjoy the preſent good, and former woe;
Ulyſſes lives his vanquiſh'd foes to ſee;
He lives to thy Telemachus and thee!
Ah no! with ſighs Penelope rejoin'd,
Exceſs of joy diſturbs thy wand'ring mind;
How bleſt this happy hour, ſhould he appear,
Dear to us all, to me ſupremely dear!
Ah no! ſome god the ſuitors deaths decreed,
Some god deſcends, and by his hand they bleed,
Blind to contemn the ſtranger's righteous cauſe,
And violate all hoſpitable laws!
The good they hated, and the Pow'rs defy'd;
But heav'n is juſt, and by a god they dy'd.
For never muſt Ulyſſes view this ſhore;
Never! the lov'd Ulyſſes is no more!
What words, the matron cries, have reach'd my ears?
Doubt we his preſence, when he now appears?
Then hear conviction: ere the fatal day
That forc'd Ulyſſes o'er the watry way,
A boar fierce-ruſhing in the ſylvan war
Plough'd half his thigh; I ſaw, I ſaw the ſcar,
And wild with tranſport had reveal'd the wound;
But ere I ſpoke, he roſe, and check'd the ſound.
Then, daughter, haſte away! and if a lie
Flow from this tongue, then let thy ſervant die!

To whom with dubious joy the queen replies,
Wise is thy soul, but errors seize the wise;
The works of gods what mortal can survey,
Who knows their motives, who shall trace their way!
But learn we instant how the suitors trod
The paths of death, by man or by a god.

v. 83. *The works of gods what mortal can survey?*] This assertion is made with great judgment. Euryclea had given almost a demonstrative proof that she was not mistaken in the person of Ulysses: she had instanced in the scar which he received by a boar on mount Parnassus; and this seemed to be an undeniable evidence of her veracity: what method then could the poet take to carry on Penelope's incredulity, and give her room to resist such evidence with any appearance of reason? This is very well explained by Eustathius. Penelope, observes that author, answers with profound wisdom; her words are short, but contain excellent truth and morality; this is her meaning: 'Euryclea, you appeal to your senses for the truth of 'your affirmation: you saw the wound, and touched it as 'you bathed him; and he forbad you to make a discovery 'of his person: from hence you conclude, that it is Ulysses who has slain the suitors: not remembring that the 'gods are able thus to shew themselves to man, and assume at their pleasure such disguises: how then do you 'know but this is a god? Are you able to know the 'ways of a deity?' To this Euryclea makes no reply; from whence we may gather, that it was believed to be an undeniable truth, that the divine beings sometimes assumed the shape of man, and appeared visibly upon earth. Such expressions as these might almost persuade us of the reality of a former conjecture, that these notions were borrowed from a tradition of the appearances of angels; they being so consonant to the testimony of the holy scriptures, and so agreeable to the manifestations of those celestial beings.

Thus ſpeaks the queen, and no reply attends,
But with alternate joy and fear deſcends;
At ev'ry ſtep debates, her lord to prove!
Or ruſhing to his arms, confeſs her love!
Then gliding through the marble valves in ſtate,
Oppos'd, before the ſhining fire ſhe ſat,
The monarch, by a column high enthron'd,
His eye withdrew, and fix'd it on the ground;

v. 89. *At ev'ry ſtep debates, her lord to prove!*
Or ruſhing to his arms, confeſs her love!]
Penelope apprehends, that the perſon mentioned by Euryclea is not Ulyſſes; yet her apprehenſions are not ſo ſtrong as to exclude all hopes that he is her huſband; in this ſtate of uncertainty ſhe deſcends, doubtful whether to meet him as ſuch, or firſt to prove him whither he be the real Ulyſſes; and this explains her conduct in this place: if he evidently were Ulyſſes, ſhe ought to receive him with tranſport; but if he be not Ulyſſes, then all ſuch advances would be acts of immodeſty, and a reproach to her prudence. Ladies are beſt judges of what is decent amongſt ladies, and madam Dacier affirms, that the point of decency is well maintained by Homer through this whole interview; and that antiquity can ſhew nothing wherein a ſeverity of manners is better obſerved. And indeed it muſt be allowed, that in this reſpect Penelope proceeds with no more than a neceſſary caution; it would have been very abſurd to have deſcribed her flying to the embraces of a ſtranger, merely upon the teſtimony of Euryclea, without waiting for a perſonal and ocular demonſtration.

v. 93. *The monarch, by a column high enthron'd.*]
The circumſtance of perſons of figure being placed by a column occurs frequently in the Odyſſey, it may therefore be neceſſary to explain it: it is mentioned twice in the eighth book, πρὸς κίονα μακρὸν ἐρείσας, but being there

Curious to hear his queen the silence break:
Amaz'd she sate, and impotent to speak;

applied to Demodocus, who was blind. it may be thought to mean only that he leaned against the pillar by reason of his blindness: but this is not the full import of the words, they denote dignity; and a seat erected near the column was a seat of distinction. Thus 2 Kings xi. 14. *Behold the king stood by a pillar*, ἐπὶ τῦ σύλυ, *as the manner was, and the princes*, etc. *by the king*. Thus we see the royal station was by some remarkable pillar; Josephus expresses it by ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς, which probably is a *corruption*; it ought to be ἐπὶ τῆς σήλης, *juxta columnam*: thus again, 2 Kings xxiii. 3. *And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant*, etc. So that by this expression of Ulysses being seated by a column, we are to understand that he received Penelope as a king; he took the royal seat, to convince her that he was the real Ulysses.

v. 94. ——*withdrew, and fix'd it on the ground;*
Curious to hear his queen the silence break.]

We have all along been vindicating the conduct of Penelope, for not immediately acknowledging Ulysses. Her ignorance of his person is her vindication; but how then is Ulysses to be justified, who is in no doubt about Penelope? Why does he not fly with transport to the wife of his affection? The reason is very evident. he very well knows that Penelope is uncertain about his person; he therefore forbears to offer violence to her modesty by any careesses while she is in this state of uncertainty, and which decency requires her to refuse till she is assured that the person who offers them is Ulysses.

Homer tells us, that Ulysses turned his eyes toward the ground. Eustathius imagines, that he does it that Penelope may not immediately discover him; but perhaps the poet intended no more than to draw Ulysses here, as he drew him in the Iliad. lib 3. and describe him according to his usual behaviour.

O'er all the man her eyes she rolls in vain,
Now hopes, now fears, now knows, then doubts again.
At length Telemachus ——Oh who can find
A woman like Penelope unkind!
Why thus in silence? why with winning charms
Thus slow to fly with rapture to his arms?
Stubborn the breast that with no transport glows,
When twice ten years are past of mighty woes:
To softness lost, to spousal love unknown,
The gods have form'd that rigid heart of stone!

——— *In thought profound,*
His modest eyes he fix'd upon the ground.

Thus also he is represented by Ovid, Metam. lib. 13.

Astitit atque oculos paulum tellure moratos
Sustulit———

Then from his seat arose Laertes' son,
Look'd down a while, and paus'd ere he begun. Dryd.

v. 96. *Amaz'd she sate, and impotent to speak.*] The reader will certainly be curious to know how Penelope accosts Ulysses in this first interview, and the poet manages it with excellent judgment: she must be supposed to be under a great surprize and confusion of thought, this surprize takes away her speech; she is tost between hopes and fears, and consequently it is very natural, before she speaks, to examine him with her eyes.

v. 106. *The gods have form'd that rigid heart of stone.*] It has been objected, that Telemachus here makes too free a remonstration to Penelope; and that he is wanting in reverence towards his mother. Eustathius answers, that he speaks no more than Ulysses says himself, in the process of the story, and consequently he is no more blameable. But the case is not the same, there is a difference between a son and a husband, and what is decent in the

O my Telemachus! the queen rejoin'd,
Distracting fears confound my lab'ring mind;
Pow'rless to speak, I scarce uplift my eyes,
Nor dare to question: doubts on doubts arise.
O deign he, if Ulysses, to remove
These boding thoughts, and what he is, to prove!
Pleas'd with her virtuous fears, the king replies,
Indulge, my son, the cautions of the wise;
Time shall the truth to sure remembrance bring;
This garb of poverty belies the king;

mouth of the latter would be irreverent in the former. Spondanus is of opinion, that he offends against decency, *juveniliter nimis insultavit*; and Ulysses seems to repress his ardor.

Indulge, my son, the cautions of the wife—
No more———

Dacier answers, that Telemachus being fully assured that it is the real Ulysses, seems shocked at the indifference of Penelope And indeed the warmth of the expression is to be imputed to the emotion of the speaker; so that we are not to look upon it as an outrage of decency toward Penelope, but a warm expostulation occasioned by his zeal for Ulysses.

v. 116. *This garb of poverty belies the king.*] This expression furnishes another cause for the incredulity of Penelope; Ulysses imputes it to his disguise, and is far from resenting it as a want of conjugal affection. I must confess, that here may seem to be an unseasonable transition: Homer brings Ulysses and Penelope together, raises our expectations to see a warm and tender description at the discovery of the husband to the wife, and all of a sudden he starts from the subject, and leaves us under an uncertainty equal to that of Penelope. The scene closes

No more.—This day our deepeſt care requires,
Cautious to act what thought mature inſpires.
If one man's blood, though mean, diſtain our hands,
The homicide retreats to foreign lands;

too abruptly, and Homer acts like one who invites his gueſts to an entertainment, and when they were ſate down with an eager appetite, takes away their dinner. But then it may be anſwered, that the occaſion preſſes: Ulyſſes finds it neceſſary to provide for his own ſafety, before the people of Ithaca are informed of the ſlaughter of the ſuitors; this is the dictate of good ſenſe; he firſt acts the wiſe man, by guarding againſt an imminent danger; and then ſhews the tender huſband, by his affection to Penelope: and this is the reaſon why he adjourns the diſcovery. Beſides, this interval, which is very ſhort, gives time to Penelope to recollect her ſpirits from ſurprize, and makes her miſtreſs of her own thoughts. In that view the reader is to look upon this break, like a pauſe between the acts in a tragedy, and as an artful interruption to introduce the unravelling more naturally, and with greater probability.

v. 119. *If one man's blood* ———] Ulyſſes here argues very concluſively: if the perſon who has ſhed one man's blood only, and that man of inferior ſtation; if he is yet obliged to fly into baniſhment, leſt he ſhould be ſlain by any of the dead perſon's relations or friends; what have they to fear, who have not only ſlain one man, but above an hundred, and theſe not plebians, but princes? They muſt neceſſarily have many avengers, who will be ready to purſue our lives.

But it may be objected, that Ulyſſes is a king, and therefore above apprehenſions of puniſhment. It is true, Ulyſſes is a king, yet ſubject to the laws: his government was not ſo deſpotic, as to have no reaſon to fear the reſentments of the chief families of his ſubjects, whoſe heirs was ſlain by his hand. I cannot entirely agree with

By us, in heaps th' illustrious peerage falls,
Th' important deed our whole attention calls.
Be that thy care, Telemachus replies,
The world conspires to speak Ulysses wise;
For wisdom all is thine! lo I obey,
And dauntless follow where you lead the way;
Nor shalt thou in the day of danger find
Thy coward son degen'rate lag behind.
Then instant to the bath, the monarch cries,
Bid the gay youth and sprightly virgins rise,
Thence all descend in pomp and proud array,
And bid the dome resound the mirthful lay;
While the sweet lyrist airs of rapture sings,
And forms the dance responsive to the strings.

Dacier in this last sentiment: Ulysses had only done an act of justice upon these offenders, and had transgressed no law by it, and ought therefore to apprehend no vengeance from the law. I should rather ascribe the apprehensions of Ulysses, to a fear of a sudden assault from the friends of the suitors before he could discover himself to be the real Ulysses. He is afraid of an assassination, not a legal punishment; the rage of the people, not the justice of the law.

v. 122. *Th' important deed our whole attention calls.*] Ulysses to prove Telemachus, and to form a judgment of his wisdom, asks his advice upon the present emergence; but the poet, in his answer, observes a due decency: Telemachus pays a laudable deference to the superior wisdom of Ulysses, and modestly submits to his judgment. What we are to gather from this conduct is, that no person should be so self-confiding in his own judgment, as to despise that of other men, though those men are inferior in wisdom.

That hence th' eluded paſſengers may ſay,
Lo! the queen weds! we hear the ſpouſal lay!
The ſuitors death unknown, till we remove
Far from the court, and act inſpir'd by Jove.

v. 135. *That hence th' eluded paſſengers may ſay,*
Lo! the queen weds——]

This is an inſtance of the art of Ulyſſes, eſſential to his character, and maintained through the whole Odyſſey. Euſtathius excellently explains the reaſon of this conduct: the ſuitors had been accuſtomed to retire from the palace, and ſleep in other places by night: it would therefore have alarmed the whole city, and made them apprehenſive that ſome calamity had befallen them, if there had not appeared a ſeeming reaſon why they returned not to their ſeveral houſes as uſual; Ulyſſes therefore invents this ſtratagem to deceive them into an opinion that they ſtayed to celebrate the queen's nuptials. But there appears to be a ſtrong objection againſt this part of the relation: we have already ſeen the ſuitors ſlain, without being heard by the Ithacans of the city; is it then probable that the ſound of the muſic ſhould be heard abroad, when the cries, ſhouts, and groans, during the fight, were not heard out of the palace? Was the muſic louder than theſe united noiſes? It is not eaſy to ſolve this difficulty, unleſs we are allowed to imagine that the more than uſual ſtay of the ſuitors in the palace had raiſed the curioſity of the Ithacans to enquire the reaſon of it; who conſequently, approaching the palace, might hear the muſic and dancing, and conclude that it was occaſioned by the queen's marriage. Beſides, in the ſtillneſs of the night, a lower ſound may be farther heard, than one more loud, during the noiſe and hurry of the day: it being evident from the preceding book, that the fight was by day.

v. 137. ——*'Till we remove*
Far from the court——]

It may be aſked, what occaſions this receſs of Ulyſſes?

Thus ſpoke the king: Th' obſervant train obey,
At once they bathe, and dreſs in proud array;
The lyriſt ſtrikes the ſtring; gay youths advance,
And fair-zon'd damſels form the ſprightly dance.
The voice, attun'd to inſtrumental ſounds,
Aſcends the roof; the vaulted roof rebounds;
Not unobſerv'd: the Greeks eluded ſay
Lo! the queen weds! we hear the ſpouſal lay!
Inconſtant! to admit the bridal hour.
Thus they——but nobly chaſte ſhe weds no more.
Mean-while the weary'd king the bath aſcends;
With faithful cares Eurynome attends,
O'er ev'ry limb a ſhow'r of fragrance ſheds:
Then dreſt in pomp, magnificent he treads.
The warrior goddeſs gives his frame to ſhine
With majeſty enlarg'd, and grace divine.
Back from his brows in wavy ringlets fly
His thick large locks, of Hyacinthine dye.
As by ſome artiſt to whom Vulcan gives
His heav'nly ſkill, a breathing image lives;
By Pallas taught, he frames the wond'rous mold,
And the pale ſilver glows with fuſile gold:

will he be better able to reſiſt his enemies in the country than in the city? The anſwer is, he withdraws that he may avoid the firſt reſentments of the Ithacans, upon the diſcovery of the death of the ſuitors: beſides, it is by this method in his power to conceal his perſon, till the violence of the people is ſettled; or raiſe a party to reſiſt their efforts: at the worſt he is certain to ſecure his flight, if his affairs ſhould be reduced to extremities.

So Pallas his heroic form improves
With bloom divine, and like a god he moves;
More high he treads, and iſſuing forth in ſtate,
Radiant before his gazing conſort ſate.
And oh, my queen! he cries; what pow'r above
Has ſteel'd that heart, averſe to ſpouſal love!
Canſt thou, Penelope, when heav'n reſtores
Thy loſt Ulyſſes to his native ſhores,
Canſt thou, oh cruel! unconcern'd ſurvey
Thy loſt Ulyſſes, on this ſignal day?
Haſte, Euryclea, and diſpatchful ſpread
For me, and me alone, th' imperial bed:

v. 171. ——*Diſpatchful ſpread*
For me, and me alone, th' imperial bed.]

Theſe words have given occaſion of cenſure from monſieur de la Mothe de Vayer: according to whom the precaution of Penelope is not much to be admired; "Ulyſſes "made himſelf ſuſpicious by expreſſing ſo much eager- "neſs to go to bed with Penelope; ſhe was ſo far from "having time enough to know him, that ſhe had ſcarce "ſpoke three words to him, but he bluntly commands "Euryclea to get the bed ready for them." So that, according to this author, Penelope miſtruſts his impatience; ſhe imagines the reaſon why he is ſo haſty, is, becauſe he fears that a longer time would diſcover his impoſture, and fruſtrate his deſires. And, indeed, if Ulyſſes had given ſuch a command, the objection had not been without a foundation. But la Mothe is deceived: Ulyſſes does not aſk a bed for himſelf and Penelope, but for *himſelf alone*, becauſe his wife vouchſafed not to come near him, and uſed him with a ſeeming cruelty.

Ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι μαῖα στόρεσον λέχος ὄφρα καὶ αὐτος
Λέξομαι

My weary nature craves the balm of reſt:
But heav'n with adamant has arm'd her breaſt.
Ah no! ſhe cries, a tender heart I bear,
A foe to pride; no adamant is there;
And now, ev'n now it melts! for ſure I ſee
Once more Ulyſſes, my belov'd, in thee!
Fix'd in my ſoul as when he ſail'd to Troy,
His image dwells: then haſte the bed of joy!
Haſte, from the bridal bow'r the bed tranſlate,
Fram'd by his hand, and be it dreſt in ſtate!

which is literally enough rendered in the tranſlation.

Haſte, Euryclea, and diſpatchful ſpread
For me, and me alone, th' imperial bed.

v. 175. *Oh no! ſhe cries, a tender heart I bear,*
A foe to pride; no adamant is there.]
It is not eaſy to tranſlate this paſſage literally.

——Οὐτ' ἄρ' μεγαλίζομαι, οὔθ' ἀθερίζω,
Οὐδὲ λίην ἄγαμαι.

Euſtathius explains μεγαλίζομαι, to ſignify, *I am not of a proud heart*; ἀθερίζω, *I deſpiſe not your poverty*; ἄγαμαι, *I am no longer under an aſtoniſhment*; or, οὐδὲ λίην ἐκπλήττομαι, *I ceaſe to be ſurprized at what I ſee and hear.* Thus Penelope ſpeaks negatively, and the meaning of her words are, that ſhe is not influenced by pride and cruelty, to perſiſt in her incredulity, but by a laudable care and caution. Euſtathius propoſes Penelope as a pattern to all women upon the like occaſion: her own eyes perſuade her that the perſon with whom ſhe confers is Ulyſſes: Euryclea acknowledges her maſter; Telemachus his father; yet ſhe dares not immediately credit her own eyes, Euryclea, or Telemachus: and the ſame author concludes with a pretty obſervation, that Ulyſſes found it

Thus ſpeaks the queen, ſtill dubious with diſguiſe;
Touch'd at her words, the king with warmth replies,

eaſier to ſubdue above an hundred enemies than the diffidence and incredulity of Penelope.

v. 183. *Thus ſpeaks the queen, ſtill dubious*——] It muſt be allowed that this is a very artful turn of thought in Penelope. Ulyſſes commands a bed to be prepared, Penelope catches the word, and ſeeming to conſent, orders Euryclea to carry the bed out of the bridal apartment, and prepare it. Now, this bed was of ſuch a nature, as to be inwrought into the ſubſtance of the apartment itſelf, and could not be removed: if, therefore, Ulyſſes had acquieſced in the injunction given by Penelope, and not diſcovered the impoſſibility of it, ſhe might very juſtly have concluded him an impoſtor, being manifeſtly ignorant of the ſecret of his own marriage-bed.

But Euſtathius ſtarts an objection againſt this whole proceſs of the diſcovery, which he calls inſolvible; and indeed if Homer fails in the unravelling of his poem, he is to be ſeverely blamed: Tully is of this opinion, *Illic enim debet toto animo a poeta in diſſolutionem nodi agi; eaque præcipua fabulæ pars eſt, quæ requirit diligentiam.* The difficulty raiſed by Euſtathius is as follows: Penelope imagines, that the perſon who pretends to be her husband is not really Ulyſſes, but a god, who not only aſſumes his form but, to favour the impoſture, the reſemblance of the wound received from the boar: now, if he be a god, how is it poſſible ſhe ſhould conceive him to be ignorant of the ſecret of the marriage-bed? and conſequently, how can ſhe be convinced of the reality of Ulyſſes from his knowledge of it, when it muſt neceſſarily be known to a god, as well as to the real Ulyſſes? all that ſhe ought to gather from it is, that the perſon with whom ſhe ſpeaks is Ulyſſes, or a god. Euſtathius replies, that Penelope, upon the diſcovery of the ſecret, makes no ſcruple to yield; becauſe whether it be Ulyſſes, or a god, her caſe is happy; if he prove to be Ulyſſes, ſhe has her wiſhes; if a god, it is no

Alas for this! what mortal ſtrength can move
Th' enormous burden; who but heav'n above?

ſmall piece of good fortune. Dacier condemns this ſolution, and tells us, that Penelope was ſo faithful to her husband, that ſhe would not have received even a god into the place of Ulyſſes: the true anſwer, continues that author, is to be drawn from the pagan theology, according to which the inferior deities were ſuppoſed to have a finite knowledge, and conſequently Penelope might think the diſcovery of the nature of the nuptial-bed a full conviction of the reality of Ulyſſes, it being ſo great a ſecret that even a god might be ignorant of it. But this is all fancy; for allowing this perſon to be a god, why might not Penelope imagine him to be a deity of the ſuperior order, and for that reaſon well acquainted with the ſecrets of this nuptial bower? eſpecially becauſe Jupiter himſelf was notorious for ſuch amorous illuſions. Dacier herſelf confeſſes this to be no juſt ſolution, but gives a very different reaſon: how is it poſſible, ſays ſhe, that this bed and whole apartment ſhould be built by the ſingle hand of Ulyſſes, without being ſeen by any perſon while he builds it? or how can any one be aſſured, that a ſecret that is known to a third perſon (Actoris) is not through weakneſs or intereſt diſcovered to others? It is true, the manner of the diſcovery entirely depends upon the choice of the poet, but I could wiſh that he had choſen a method more probable than this of the nuptial bed, which, in my judgment, continues the ſame author, is unworthy of the Odyſſey. I am perſuaded that this is one of the places where, as Horace writes, Homer nods.

I will lay together what occurs to me by way of reply. The firſt objection is, that Penelope imagines Ulyſſes to be a god, and conſequently his knowledge of the nuptial bed ought not to have induced her to believe him to be the real Ulyſſes: the anſwer is, Penelope thought him a god only during her firſt tranſport; it is to be imputed to her ſurprize, that ſhe at all thinks him a deity: this is very

It mocks the weak attempts of human hands;
But the whole earth must move, if heav'n commands.

evident, for from the moment she saw him, the thought of his divinity vanishes, and she never mentions one word concerning such a supposition, nay, from the first glance she almost believes him to be the real Ulysses.

O'er all the man her eyes she rolls in vain,
Now hopes, now fears, now knows, then doubts again.

She is so far from thinking him a deity, that she is almost persuaded that he is her husband. If this be allowed, the first difficulty ceases: for granting her belief that the person before her is a real man, and no man but Ulysses was acquainted with the nuptial bed; it follows, that this man is the real Ulysses, and that this incident is not ill chosen by the poet, in the discovery of Ulysses.

Dacier objects, that this apartment could not possibly be erected without being known to other persons; but we have seen Ulysses build a ship in a solitary island, without the assistance of any man, in the fifth Odyssey; and why may he not then be allowed to do the same, with respect to this nuptial bower? All kind of arts in mechanics were antiently practised by the greatest personages, and their knowledge and dexterity in them was esteemed a glory. This consideration may perhaps reconcile the reader to this part of the discovery.

The only difficulty that now remains is this: Actoris, a female servant, is allowed to be in the secret: how then can Penelope be assured that she has not betrayed it? Homer himself obviates this objection; he has, in a very solemn manner, told us, that only twelve of all the female train were guilty of a breach of trust, and therefore Penelope may safely rely upon the fidelity of Actoris. Besides, it adds no small weight to this vindication of Homer, to observe, that the whole procedure of the discovery is accidental; how could Ulysses fore-know that the proof of

Then hear ſure evidence, while we diſplay
Words ſeal'd with ſacred truth, and truth obey:
This hand the wonder fram'd; an olive ſpread
Full in the court its ever-verdant head.
Vaſt as ſome mighty column's bulk on high
The huge trunk roſe, and heav'd into the ſky;

his veracity would depend upon his knowledge of the bridal bower? and conſequently it is not to be imagined that he ſhould have made any clandeſtine enquires about it: it may be added, that Ulyſſes has been no more than five days upon the Ithacan ſhores, and probably had never ſeen Actoris, who alone was acquainted with the nature of this bed: no perſon was antiently permitted to enter the womens apartment, but fathers, husbands, or brothers; this therefore was the greateſt ſecret in all families; this ſecret Penelope propoſes in the trial of Ulyſſes, and upon his knowledge of it receives him as her husband. To inſtance almoſt in a parallel caſe; Oreſtes in Euripides tells Iphigenia, that the lance which Pelops uſed in the combat againſt Ænomaus was lodged in her apartment; this circumſtance convinces her that the perſon who knew this ſecret muſt be her brother Oreſtes, no perſons of a more diſtant relation being admitted into ſuch privacies.

v. 193. *Vaſt as ſome mighty column's bulk on high*
The huge trunk roſe———]

I will not promiſe that the reader will be pleaſed with this deſcription of the nuptial bowers: the Greek is noble, and the words ſounding and harmonious; an happineſs that is wanting in our language. In this, and the like caſes, the tranſlator muſt ſay, with Lucretius upon a like occaſion,

——*Graiorum obſcura reperta*
Difficile illuſtrare Latinis verſibus eſſe,
Propter egeſtatem linguæ, et rerum novitatem.

Beſides, it muſt be allowed, that the relation itſelf is very

Around the tree I rais'd a nuptial bow'r
And roof'd defensive of the storm and show'r;
The spacious valve, with art inwrought, conjoins;
And the fair dome with polish'd marble shines.

wonderful; for it is not easy to conceive that the bole of an olive-tree should be so large as to contain, upon the dimensions of it, a whole bed-sted. I would willingly imagine, that it is only a supporter of it. It is likewise somewhat extraordinary, that this olive-tree is not felled, or cut up from the roots; for Eustathius informs us, that προλάμων signifies *to cut asunder at some distance from the earth;* so that a great part of the trunk is left standing, upon which Ulysses builds his bridal bed. What occurs to me upon this incident is, that Homer must be imagined to write according to the customs of the age in which he lived, unless we can suppose he unnecessarily invented an absurdity: I therefore doubt not but there were antiently such beds as this of Ulysses. Besides, the more wonderful this is, the better it serves for the purpose of Homer, in convincing us that the person who was acquainted with a matter so uncommon must be the real Ulysses, and not an impostor; it is for this purpose that the poet describes the bower built round the olive-tree, before the framing of the bed is at all mentioned.

Around the tree I rais'd a nuptial bow'r,
And roof'd defensive of the storm and show'r:
Then lopp'd the branchy head: aloft in twain
Sever'd the bole, and smooth'd the shining grain.

This, I say, is particularly described by Homer, to convince us that the place where the bed stood was entirely secret; it being closed up from observation before this particular apartment was undertaken, and therefore the knowledge of it was a strong argument that the person who was acquainted with it must be the real Ulysses.

I lopp'd the branchy head; aloft in twain
Sever'd the bole, and smooth'd the shining grain;
Then posts, capacious of the frame, I raise,
And bore it, regular from space to space;
Athwart the frame at equal distance lye
Thongs of tough hides, that boast a purple dye;
Then polishing the whole, the finish'd mold
With silver shone, with elephant, and gold.
But if o'erturn'd by rude, ungovern'd hands,
Or still inviolate the olive stands,
'Tis thine, oh queen, to say: and now impart,
If fears remain, or doubts distract thy heart?

While yet he speaks, her pow'rs of life decay,
She sickens, trembles, falls, and faints away:
At length recov'ring, to his arms she flew,
And strain'd him close, as to his breast she grew;
The tears pour'd down amain: and oh, she cries,
Let not against thy spouse thine anger rise!
O vers'd in every turn of human art,
Forgive the weakness of a woman's heart!
The righteous Pow'rs that mortal lots dispose,
Decree us to sustain a length of woes,
And from the flow'r of life, the bliss deny
To bloom together, fade away, and dye.
O let me let me not thine anger move,
That I forbore, thus, thus, to speak my love;
Thus in fond kisses, while the transport warms,
Pour out my soul, and die within thy arms!
I dreaded fraud! men, faithless men, betray
Our easy faith, and make the sex their prey:

Againſt the fondneſs of my heart I ſtrove,
'Twas caution, oh my lord! not want of love:
Like me had Helen fear'd, with wanton charms
Ere the fair miſchief ſet two worlds in arms,

v. 231. *Like me had Helen fear'd*———] This paſſage occaſioned great diſputes amongſt the antient critics; ſome contended for the common punctuation; others thus read it,

Εἰ ἤδη,———

Then the meaning of the paſſage is thus to be underſtood. Helen would not have yielded to a ſtranger, if ſhe had known that ſtranger, ἐὶ ἤδη ἀνδρὰ is to be underſtood according to this interpretation. The ſame critics thus conſtrue the following words,

Ο μιν αὖτις ἀρήϊοι υἷες Ἀχαιῶν, etc.

Ο is the ſame with διὰ ὅ, *propter hanc cauſam*, and the whole paſſage is thus to be tranſlated, *If Helen had known the ſtranger, ſhe would not have yielded to him; therefore the Greeks roſe in arms to free her from the impoſtor.* They defend this application by having recourſe to a tradition, that Paris could never have obtained the conſent of Helen if Venus had not given him the reſemblance of Menelaus, in whoſe form he prevailed upon that fatal beauty; otherways the inſtance is no way parallel: for if Helen was not deceived, how can her example be brought to induce Penelope to act with caution, leſt ſhe take an impoſtor to her bed inſtead of an husband? I confeſs this conſtruction of the Greek appears to me very obſcure; contrary to the ſtile of Homer, which is always clear and natural. Beſides, it contradicts the whole ſtory of Helen through the Iliad and Odyſſey, and ſhe herſelf no where alledges this deceit as her excuſe, but frequently condemns her own conduct in forſaking the bed of Menelaus. But granting that ſhe was thus deceived originally, the deceit

Ere Greece rose dreadful in the avenging day,
Thus had she fear'd, she had not gone astray.
But heav'n, averse to Greece, in wrath decreed
That she should wander, and that Greece should bleed:
Blind to the ills that from injustice flow,
She colour'd all our wretched lives with woe.
But why these sorrows, when my lord arrives?
I yield, I yield! my own Ulysses lives!
The secrets of the bridal bed are known
To thee, to me, to Actoris alone,
(My father's present in the spousal hour,
The sole attendant on our genial bow'r.)
Since what no eye has seen, thy tongue reveal'd,
Hard and distrustful as I am, I yield.

Touch'd to the soul, the king with rapture hears,
Hangs round her neck, and speaks his joy in tears.
As to the shipwreck'd mariner, the shores,
Delightful rise, when angry Neptune roars,
Then, when the surge in thunder mounts the sky,
And gulph'd in crouds at once the sailors die,
If one more happy, while the tempest raves,
Out-lives the tumult of conflicting waves,

must necessarily soon appear, and yet she voluntarily cohabits many years with Paris. The other interpretation may therefore perhaps be preferable; namely, if Helen had considered what evils might ensue from her injury to Menelaus, she would have acted more wisely: this Penelope introduces to vindicate her conduct in acting with so much caution; she opposes her wariness to the inconsiderateness of Helen, and ascribes all the calamities of Greece to it.

All pale, with ooze deform'd, he views the ſtrand,
And plunging forth with tranſport graſps the land.
The raviſh'd queen with equal rapture glows,
Claſps her lov'd lord, and to his boſom grows.
Nor had they ended till the morning ray:
But Pallas backward held the riſing day,
The wheels of night retarding, to detain
The gay Aurora in the wavy main:

v. 260. *But Pallas backward held the riſing day.*] We are not to look upon this merely as a poetical ornament, there is no neceſſity for it. The battle between the ſuitors and Ulyſſes happened in the evening; ſince then we have ſeen the palace purified, the dead ſuitors carried away, and the female ſervants puniſhed; Euryclea has held a long conference with Penelope, there has been ſinging and dancing in the palace, and an interview at large deſcribed between Ulyſſes and Penelope! then the poet proceeds to recapitulate the ſtory of the whole Odyſſey: now, all theſe incidents could not be comprehended in the compaſs of one night: Homer, therefore, to reconcile it to probability, introduces Minerva to protract it, and make the time proportionable to the incidents. But, perhaps, it may be thought a violent machine, and contrary to the eſtabliſhed laws of nature, to ſuppoſe the courſe of the night alterable: the anſwer is, poets are allowed to write according to common fame, and what Homer here relates could not ſhock the ears of the ancients, who had before heard of the like ſtory at the conception of Hercules. I will only obſerve, that Homer gives no more than two horſes to Aurora's chariot, Lampus and Phaeton; whereas the chariot of the ſun is deſcribed with four: Thus Ovid,

Interea volucres Pyroeis, Eous, et Æthon,
Solis equi, quartuſque Phlegon.

Whose flaming steeds, emerging through the night,
Beam o'er the eastern hills with streaming light.
At length Ulysses with a sigh replies:
Yet fate, yet cruel fate repose denies;
A labour long, and hard remains behind;
By heav'n above, by hell beneath enjoin'd:
For, to Tiresias through th' eternal gates
Of hell I trode, to learn my future fates.
But end we here——the night demands repose,
Be deck'd the couch! and peace a-while my woes!
To whom the queen. Thy word we shall obey,
And deck the couch; far hence be woes away!
Since the just gods who tread the starry plains
Restore thee safe, since my Ulysses reigns.
But what those perils heav'n decrees, impart;
Knowledge may grieve, but fear distracts the heart.

v. 278. *Knowledge may grieve, but fear distracts the heart.*] Ulysses had said, in the sentence immediately preceding,

A labour long, and hard, remains.

This could not fail of alarming Penelope, and raising all her curiosity to know it. Homer would greatly have offended against nature, if he had not described her under an impatience upon the mention of it: her fondness is too sincere to be indifferent upon such a suggestion, but her answer to Ulysses chiefly demands observation.

If heav'n a kind release from ills foreshows,
Triumph, thou happy victor of thy woes!

This discovers a greatness of spirit worthy of a queen and heroine: she is threatened to lose Ulysses by a second ab-

To this the king. Ah why muſt I diſcloſe
A dreadful ſtory of approaching woes?
Why in this hour of tranſport wound thy ears,
When thou muſt learn what I muſt ſpeak with tears?
Heav'n, by the Theban ghoſt, thy ſpouſe decrees,
Torn from thy arms, to ſail a length of ſeas;
From realm to realm a nation to explore
Who ne'er knew ſalt, or heard the billows roar,
Nor ſaw gay veſſel ſtem the ſurgy plain,
A painted wonder, flying on the main,
An oar my hand muſt bear; a ſhepherd eyes
The unknown inſtrument with ſtrange ſurprize,
And calls a corn-van: this upon the plain
I fix, and hail the monarch of the main:
Then bathe his altars with the mingled gore
Of victims vow'd, a ram, a bull, a boar:
Then ſwift re-ſailing to my native ſhores,
Due victims ſlay to all th' æthereal pow'rs.

ſence, ſhe is alarmed with a new train of ſufferings; but being informed that all theſe calamities will end in a proſperous iſſue, that long life and happineſs attend him, ſhe not only takes courage perſonally, but comforts her huſband. Homer was too good a judge of decency to aſcribe the weakneſs that attends the generality of that ſex to Penelope; ſhe has a bravery of ſoul worthy of a heroine in epic poetry. Beſides, this is a further inſtance of Homer's judgment: the event of the Odyſſey is to ſhew Ulyſſes happy; now, if the poet had not fully ſatisfied the reader in this reſpect, he had not reinſtated his hero in proſperity, and conſequently had defeated the moral of the Odyſſey, which is to ſhew wiſdom and virtue triumphant, by repreſenting his hero after all difficulties ſettled in full tranquillity.

Then heav'n decrees in peace to end my days,
And ſteal myſelf from life by ſlow decays;
Unknown to pain in age reſign my breath,
When late ſtern Neptune points the ſhaft of death;
To the dark grave retiring as to reſt;
My people bleſſing, by my people bleſt.

Such future ſcenes th' all-righteous Pow'rs diſplay,
By their dread Seer *, and ſuch my future day.

To whom thus firm of ſoul: If ripe for death,
And full of days, thou gently yield thy breath:
While heav'n a kind releaſe from ills foreſhows,
Triumph, thou happy victor of thy woes!

But Euryclea, with diſpatchful care,
And ſage Eurynome, the couch prepare:
Inſtant they bid the blazing torch diſplay
Around the dome an artificial day;
Then to repoſe her ſteps the matron bends,
And to the queen Eurynome deſcends;
A torch ſhe bares to light with guiding fires
The royal pair; ſhe guides them, and retires.
Then inſtant his fair ſpouſe Ulyſſes led
To the chaſte love-rites of the nuptial bed.

* Tireſias.

v. 317. ——*His fair ſpouſe Ulyſſes led*
To the chaſte love-rites of the nuptial bed.]

The reader may be pleaſed to conſult the annotations on book XI. v. 152. concerning the anſwer of Ulyſſes to Penelope; it being a repetition from that part of the Odyſſey.

Euſtathius informs us, that Ariſtarchus, and Ariſtophanes the grammarian, thought the verſe quoted at the head of this remark to be the concluſion of the Odyſſey, and

And now the blooming youths and ſprightly fair
Ceaſe the gay dance, and to their reſt repair; 320

conſequently they judged the remaining part of this book, and the whole twenty fourth, ſuppoſititious: but thoſe who were of a contrary opinion replied, that by ending the poem with that verſe, many incidents of great importance would be rejected; for inſtance, the recapitulation of the whole Odyſſey, and eſpecially the diſcovery of Ulyſſes to his father Laertes, with all the beautiful fictions contained in it. They add, that if the little relation that the beginning of that book bears to the ſubject of the poem, be a reaſon for the rejection of it, we muſt, for the ſame reaſon, abridge the poem, and reject a multitude of the fables which are ſcattered through the whole courſe of it. It may therefore be conjectured, that Ariſtarchus and Ariſtophanes were not of opinion that the poem ended with this verſe, but only the moſt neceſſary and important incidents. Caſaubon, in a remark upon a paſſage of Strabo, favours the opinion of Ariſtarchus, for he there ſpeaks of the laſt book as if he ſuſpected it to be ſpurious; and Rapin joins in the ſame judgment. Homer is to be defended in another manner, than by ſuch arguments as are brought in anſwer to Ariſtarchus. The ſame objection has been made againſt the two laſt books of the Iliad, as againſt theſe of the Odyſſey; the former ought to have ended with the deciſive action in the death of Hector, and the latter with the diſcovery of Ulyſſes to Penelope, when his happineſs ſeems to be eſtabliſhed. But there is no weight in theſe objections. There is a difference between the *unravelling* of the action, and the full *accompliſhment* of it; the action is unravelled by the death of the ſuitors; but there are conſequences ariſing from their deaths that hinder the accompliſhment of the action, namely, the danger of the reſentments of their friends, who riſe in arms to revenge their ſlaughter; and till their inſurrection is pacified, Ulyſſes cannot be ſaid to be in a ſtate of ſecurity. The ſubject of the Iliad is the anger of

But in discourse the king and consort lay,
While the soft hours stole unperceiv'd away;
Intent he hears Penelope disclose
A mournful story of domestic woes,

Achilles: that of the Odyssey, the re-establishment of Ulysses in his dominions: now, the anger of Achilles ends not with the death of Hector, nor is Ulysses fully re-established by the death of the suitors; he has another obstacle to overcome, and till the commotions of the Ithacans are appeased, the design of the poem is not executed, which is to shew Ulysses in peaceful possession of his palace and authority. We see in this very book that Ulysses is forced to fly from his own palace; can he then be said to be re-established in tranquillity: this very action demostrates, that what follows is part of the subject of the poem, and such a part, as if it had not been related, would have given us room to imagine that Homer had never finished it, or that the conclusion of it had been lost. The beginning of the action is his sailing from Troy toward his country; the middle contains all the calamities he sustains in his return, the disorders of his family before and after it; and the end of the action is his re-establishment in the peaceful possession of his kingdoms, when he is acknowledged by his wife, father, family, and subjects: now this is not compleated till the very end of the last book, and consequently that book is not spurious, but essential. The poet had ended very injudiciously, if he had stopped before; for the reader would have remained unsatisfied in two necessary points, *viz* how he was made known to Laertes, and what vengeance the chief families of the nation endeavoured to take against the destroyers of their sons; but this storm being once blown over, and all his subjects, who had taken arms, being either vanquished or appeased, the action is compleated in all its parts, and consummates the Odyssey.

v. 324. *A mournful story of domestic woes.*] It is with

His ſervants inſults, his invaded bed,
How his whole flocks and herds exhauſted bled,

great judgment that the poet paſſes thus briefly over the ſtory of Penelope; he makes her impatience to hear the hiſtory of Ulyſſes the pretended occaſion of her conciſeneſs; the true reaſon is, he is unwilling to tire his reader by repeating what he already knows: it is likewiſe remarkable, that Ulyſſes does not begin his own adventures by a detail of his ſufferings during the war of Troy: for this would have been foreign to the deſign of the Odyſſey; but with his ſailing from Troy to the Cicons; and enters directly into the ſubject of it. He likewiſe concludes an epitome of the whole Odyſſey in the compaſs of one and thirty lines; and purpoſely contracts it, becauſe we are already acquainted with the whole relation.

Lycophron has given us a ſummary of the wanderings of Ulyſſes; which if any one is deſirous to compare with this of Homer, he will ſee the difference between a clear, and an obſcure writer. Tibullus in his panegyric on Meſſalla has been more ſucceſsful than Lycophron, he follows the order of Homer, and treads directly in his footſteps.

Nam Ciconumque manus adverſis repulit armis,
Non valuit Lotos captos avertere curſus;
Ceſſit et Etnææ Neptunius incola rupis,
Victa Maronæo fœdatus lumina Baccho.
Vexit et Æolios placidum per Nerea ventos;
Incultos adiit Læſtrygonas, etc.

Dacier is of opinion, that this recapitulation in Homer has a very good effect. I will tranſlate her obſervation. We learn from it, that the ſubject of the Odyſſey is not alone the return of Ulyſſes to his country, and his re-eſtabliſhment in it; but that it comprehends all his wanderings and all his voyages; all that he ſaw or ſuffered in his return to it; in a word, all that he underwent after he

His generous wines diſhonour'd ſhed in vain,
And the wild riots of the ſuitor-train.
The king alternate a dire tale relates,
Of wars, of triumphs, and diſaſtrous fates;
All he unfolds: his liſt'ning ſpouſe turns pale
With pleaſing horror at the dreadful tale,
Sleepleſs devours each word: and hears, how ſlain
Cicons on Cicons ſwell th' enſanguin'd plain;
How to the land of Lote unbleſt he ſails;
And images the rills, and flow'ry vales!
How daſh'd like dogs, his friends the Cyclops tore,
(Not unreveng'd) and quaff'd the ſpouting gore;
How the loud ſtorms in priſon bound, he ſails
From friendly Æolus with proſp'rous gales;

ſet ſail from the ſhores of Troy: another advantage we reap from it is, that we ſee the order and train of the adventures of his hero, as they really happened, naturally and hiſtorically: for in his relation of them in his poem, he uſes an artificial order; that is, he begins at the latter end, and finds an opportunity to inſert all that preceeds the opening of his poem by way of narration to the Phæacians: here he ſets every event in its natural order, ſo that with a glance of the eye we may diſtinguiſh what gives continuity to the action, and what is comprehended in it. By this method we are able to ſeparate the time of the duration of the poem from the time of the duration of the action; for in reality the poem begins many years before the return of Ulyſſes; but Homer begins his action but thirty five days before he lands in his own country. In the courſe therefore of the Odyſſey. Homer gave us the artificial, here the natural order; which is an eaſe and aſſiſtance to the memory of the reader.

Yet fate withſtands! a ſudden tempeſt roars
And whirls him groaning from his native ſhores:
How on the barb'rous Læſtrigonian coaſt,
By ſavage hands his fleet and friends he loſt;
How ſcarce himſelf ſurviv'd: he paints the bow'r,
The ſpells of Circe and her magic pow'r;
His dreadful journey to the realms beneath,
To ſeek Tireſias in the vales of death;
How in the doleful manſions he ſurvey'd
His royal mother, pale Anticlea's ſhade;
And friends in battle ſlain, heroic ghoſts!
Then how unharm'd he paſt the Siren-coaſts,
The juſtling rocks, where fierce Charybdis raves,
And howling Scylla whirls her thund'rous waves,
The cave of death! How his companions ſlay
The oxen ſacred to the god of day,

v. 355. ——— *How his companions ſlay*
The oxen ſacred to the god of day.]

The ſtory of theſe oxen is fully related, lib. 12. I refer to the annotations. The crime of the companions of Ulyſſes was ſacrilege, they having deſtroyed the herds ſacred to a god. Theſe herds were ſaid to be immortal: I have there given the reaſon of it, but too conciſely, and will therefore add a ſupplement from the Polyhymnia of Herodotus; I ought to have mentioned, that the body of ſoldiers called Immortal, was a ſelect number of men in the army of Xerxes: ſo named, becauſe upon the death of any one of their number whether by war or ſickneſs, another was immediately ſubſtituted in his room, ſo that they never amounted to more or leſs than ten thouſand. If we apply this piece of hiſtory to the herds of Apollo, it excellently explains Homer's poetry: they are called Immortal, becauſe, upon the death of any one of

Till Jove in wrath the ratl'ing tempeſt guides,
And whelms th' offenders in the roaring tides:

the whole herd, another was brought into its place; they are ſaid neither to increaſe nor decay, becauſe they were always of a fixed number, and continually ſupplied upon any vacancy.

The reader will be apprized of the heinouſneſs of the crime in killing theſe oxen, from an obſervation of Bochart, p. 314. The Phœnicians and Ægyptians ſo ſuperſtitiouſly abſtained from the fleſh of the ox, that, as Porphyry affirms, they would ſooner feed on human fleſh than that of ſuch beaſts. Ælian tells us, that it was death among the Phrygians to kill a labouring ox; and Varro, Ruſt. lib. 2. cap. 5. thus writes; *ab hoc antiqui manus ita abſtineri voluerunt, ut capite ſanxerint, ſi quis occidiſſet.* Thus alſo Columella, in Præfat. l. 7. *Cujus tanta fuit apud antiquos veneratio, ut tam capitale eſſet bovem necaſſe, quam civem.*

I have been the more full upon this head, to ſhew that Homer's fiction is built upon a foundation of truth, and that he writes according to the religion of the ancients: Rapin is very ſevere upon him for aſcribing the death of the companions of Ulyſſes, to the violation of theſe herds of Apollo. "The reaſon, ſays he, why they are deſtroyed is very ridiculous, becauſe, lib. 1.

——They dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day.

"This is certainly a far fetched deſtruction: the hero, "or the poet was willing to be freed from them." But from this obſervation, they will be found to be guilty of ſacrilege, and a violation of what was regarded by the world with the utmoſt veneration; and conſequently the crime is adequate to the puniſhment. Beſides, Horace, Epiſt. 6. lib. 1. gives ſentence again theſe companions of Ulyſſes.

How ſtruggling through the ſurge, he reach'd the ſhores
Of fair Ogygia, and Calypſo's bow'rs;
Where the gay blooming nymph conſtrain'd his ſtay,
With ſweet reluctant amorous delay;
And promis'd, vainly promis'd, to beſtow
Immortal life exempt from age and woe:
How ſav'd from ſtorms Phæacia's coaſt he trod,
By great Alcinous honour'd as a god,
Who gave him laſt his country to behold,
With change of raiment, braſs, and heaps of gold.
He ended, ſinking into ſleep, and ſhares
A ſweet forgetfulneſs of all his cares.
Soon as ſoft ſlumber eas'd the toils of day,
Minerva ruſhes through th' aereal way,

———*Cærite cera*
Digni, remigium vitioſum Ithacenſis Ulyſſei;
Cui potior patria fuit interdicta voluptas.

v. 361. *Where the gay blooming nymph conſtrain'd his ſtay.*] This is a circumſtance, obſerves madam Dacier, that Ulyſſes ought by no means to forget; for it gives him an opportunity to pay an high compliment to his wife, by letting her know he preferred her perſon to that of Calypſo a goddeſs: this is the reaſon why he enlarges upon it in five verſes; whereas he concludes moſt of the other adventures in little more than one. But, adds that lady, we may eaſily believe, that he was ſilent about the nature of his converſation with that nymph; and indeed it would have leſſened the compliment, and perhaps his welcome home, if he had not been able to keep a ſecret; he is very cautious in this reſpect; he enlarges upon the fondneſs of Calypſo for his perſon, but ſuppreſſes, for a very obvious reaſon, the kind returns he made for her civilities.

And bids Aurora with her golden wheels
Flame from the ocean o'er the eastern hills:
Uprose Ulysses from the genial bed,
And thus with thought mature the monarch said.
My queen, my consort! through a length of years,
We drank the cup of sorrow mix'd with tears,
Thou, for thy lord; while me th' immortal Pow'rs
Detain'd reluctant from my native shores.
Now, blest again by heav'n, the queen display,
And rule our palace with an equal sway:
Be it my care, by loans, or martial toils,
To throng my empty'd folds, with gifts or spoils.
But now I haste to bless Laertes' eyes
With sight of his Ulysses ere he dies;
The good old man, to wasting woes a prey,
Weeps a sad life in solitude away.
But hear, though wife! this morning shall unfold
The deathful scene, on heroes, heroes roll'd;
Thou with thy maids within the palace stay,
From all the scene of tumult far away!
He spoke, and sheath'd in arms, incessant flies
To wake his son; and bid his friends arise.
To arms! aloud he cries: his friends obey,
With glitt'ring arms their manly limbs array,
And pass the city-gate; Ulysses leads the way.
Now flames the rosy dawn, but Pallas shrouds
The latent warriors in a veil of clouds.

v. 398. ——— *Pallas shrouds*
The latent warriors in a veil of clouds.]
Ulysses, to avoid observation, leaves the city at the point

of day, before the darkneſs was quite diſpelled; this is the ſuggeſtion of his own wiſdom, which is figured by Minerva.

This book ends in the morning of the forty firſt day. There are but few verſes in the tranſlation, more than in Homer: I ſpeak it not as if this were a beauty, it may as well be a fault; our heroic verſe conſiſts but of ten ſyllables, the Greek oftentimes of ſeventeen, as in this verſe,

Αυτις ἔπειτα πέδονδε κυλίνδετο λᾶας ἀϊναιδὴς.

We therefore write with the diſadvantage of ſeven ſyllables, which makes it generally impoſſible to comprehend the ſenſe of one line in Homer within the compaſs of one line in a tranſlation, with any tolerable beauty; but in ſome parts, where the ſubject ſeemed to hang heavy, this has been attempted; with what ſucceſs, muſt be left to the reader.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XXIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The ſouls of the ſuitors are conducted by Mercury to the infernal ſhades. Ulyſſes in the country goes to the retirement of his father Laertes; he finds him buſied in his garden all alone: the manner of his diſcovery to him is beautifully deſcribed. They return together to his lodge, and the king is acknowledged by Dolius and the ſervants. The Ithacenſians, led by Eupithes the father of Antinous, riſe againſt Ulyſſes, who gives them battle, in which Eupithes is killed by Laertes: and the goddeſs Pallas makes a laſting peace between Ulyſſes and his ſubjects, which concludes the Odyſſey.

CYLLENIUS now to Pluto's dreary reign
Conveys the dead, a lamentable train!
The golden wand, that cauſes ſleep to fly,
Or in ſoft number ſeals the wakeful eye,

It has been already proved, that this book is the genuine work of Homer; but perhaps the reader may not be diſpleaſed to ſee the reaſons why it was rejected by ſo grear a critic as Ariſtarchus: I ſhall therefore lay them before him from Didymus and Spondanus.

Ariſtarchus affirms, that this is the only place in Homer, where Mercury performs the office of conducting the ſouls of the dead; and that there is no proof he was known ſo early by the title of ψυχοπομπος; that this is

That drives the ghosts to realms of night or day, 5
Points out the long, uncomfortable way.

the only passage where he is called Cyllenius; that the ceremony of his guiding the souls is contrary to other descriptions of Homer, where they all descend without a guide into the mansions of the dead, even before the funeral rites. That it is absurd to imagine a *white rock* in these kingdoms of darkness, *etc.* To these Didymus thus replies. If a single mention of any incident in Homer were a reason for its objection, abundance of passages must be rejected. He thinks it a sufficient argument, that Mercury was called ψυχοπομπος, and Cyllenius in the days of Homer, that he is here mentioned under these titles; but this is begging the question. He adds, that although the souls of the dead descend without a guide in other places, this hinders not but they may descend with one; for they are in other places only said in general to descend, whereas here the manner of their descent is particularized. Neither is it any objection against this book, to say that it is contrary to the manner of Homer to describe the shades of the dead received immediately into the state of Achilles, Agamemnon, *etc.* before the performance of their funeral ceremonies; this, says he, is a favour granted by Mercury to Ulysses, who was descended from that deity, he being the father of Arcisius, and consequently great grandfather to Ulysses. It was the opinion of the ancients, that the shades of the deceased could visit the earth before the obsequies were finished, but not afterwards; this is evident from the words of Patroclus, Iliad 23.

——————To the farther shore,
When once we pass, the soul returns no more.

It is therefore out of favour to Ulysses, that Mercury introduces these shades into the region where Agamemnon resided, before the funeral ceremonis, that they might

Trembling the ſpectres glide, and plaintive vent
Thin, hollow ſcreams, along the deep deſcent.

not return to earth and diſquiet Ulyſſes. But there may be a ſtronger objection made againſt the former part of this book; namely, that this is an epiſode which has no relation to the principal ſubject, and that we may retrench it without deſtroying any part of the action eſſential to the Odyſſey: but it may be anſwered, that though it makes no part of the principal action, yet it has a ſufficient connection with it: it is the ſequel of the death of the ſuitors, and conſequently the principal action is the cauſe of it; it is drawn and deduced from it, and Homer makes a very happy uſe of it to adorn and diverſify his poem, with the hiſtory of what happened before Troy, after the concluſion of the Iliad; and in particular, with the death of Achilles, and a deſcription of his funeral ceremonies. Didymus, Dacier.

Plato, in the beginning of his third dialogue, de Repub. brings an heavy charge againſt Homer, for the diſadvantageous character he gives of a future ſtate. He quotes the ſimilitude of the bats, and affirms, that the dreadful deſcription of the condition of the dead, muſt deter mankind from hazarding their lives, even in the cauſe of their country. 'Let us then, ſays that author, with the permiſſion of Homer and other poets, reject ſuch relations, 'not becauſe they are unpoetical, not becauſe they are 'unpleaſant to read, but becauſe by how much they are 'more pleaſant and poetical, by ſo much they are more 'dangerous, and to be kept from our youth, and men, 'who are born to aſſert their liberty with the hazard of 'their lives, and to prefer death to ſlavery.' It muſt be allowed, that this is ſtrong reaſoning, and it is not eaſy to guard the doctrine of Homer from ſuch unhappy conſequences; for why ſhould men chuſe to die, rather than be ſlaves, when by death they fall into a worſe condition? It will not be an anſwer to ſay that Homer aſſerts a threefold ſtate in futurity, *viz.* of the ſoul, the ἄδωλον or *ve-*

As in a cavern of some rifted den,
Where flock nocturnal bats, and birds obscene;
Cluster'd they hang, till at some sudden shock,
They move, and murmurs run through all the rock:
So cow'ring fled the sable heaps of ghosts,
And such a scream fill'd all the dismal coasts.
And now they reach'd the earth's remotest ends,
And now the gates where ev'ning Sol descends,
And Leucas' rock, and Ocean's utmost streams,
And now pervade the dusky land of dreams.

hicle, and the body: and that while the vehicle is in this condition of horrors, the soul may be happy; for still the state of the dead is represented as a state of horror, and man is in part, namely, in his ἄϑλιον, miserable after death: nay, so miserable, that even Hercules, who was a god, and received amongst the deities, is yet tormented in hell, lib. XI.

Here hov'ring ghosts, like fowl, his shades surround,
And clang their pinions with terrific sound;
Gloomy as night he stands, in act to throw
Th'aerial arrow from the twanging bow.

It will indeed be a vindication of Homer as a poet, to say, that he wrote according to the opinion of his age; and that such as was the notion of the ancients of a future state, such is his description of it. I will only add, that we may collect from Plato, that he judged this book genuine, for he quotes this passage as Homer's.

v. 17. *And Leucas' rock*———] This description of the descent into hell is more particular than that in the XIth Odyssey; and each particular is well suited to the subject; the descent is fabled to be by the ocean, because the sun seems to descend through it into night, or

And reſt at laſt, where ſouls unbodied dwell
In ever flow'ring meads of aſphodel.

the region of darkneſs, in the weſtern parts of heaven. Milton fables the ſun to riſe through the gates of light, after the manner of the ancients.

——————Till morn,
Wak'd by the circling hours, with roſy hand
Unbarr'd the gates of light————

The circumſtance likewiſe of going through the region of dreams is well choſen; dreams are the attendants of ſleep, the brother of death; they come by night, and are therefore well imagined to have relation to the kingdom of death, and to be introductory to it; Virgil, in the deſcent of Æneas into hell, has borrowed this image,

————*Quem ſedem ſomnia vulgo*
Vana tenere ferant————

The god of ſleep there hides his heavy head,
And empty dreams on every leaf are ſpread.

The only circumſtance liable to objection is, the Leucadian, or *white* rock, which Ariſtarchus thought improperly placed in the road to the realms of darkneſs; but, replies Euſtathius, this is only meant of a rock ſtanding on the extremities of the earth, or a rock on which the laſt rays of the ſun fall. Dacier imagines that there is a further meaning in the expreſſion: 'There is an iſland 'over againſt Acarnania, on the weſt of Ithaca, called 'Leucas, from a white rock ſtanding in it; this rock was 'famous in antiquity, becauſe lovers in deſpair threw 'themſelves from the top of it into the ocean; it was 'called *the lovers leap*, and being thus remarkable for 'the deaths of numbers of people, Homer places it here.' This is no ill explication; for a rock may well be feign-

The empty forms of men inhabit there,
Impaſſive ſemblance, images of air!
Nought elſe are all that ſhin'd on earth before;
Ajax, and great Achilles, are no more!
Yet ſtill a maſter ghoſt, the reſt he aw'd,
The reſt ador'd him, tow'ring as he trod;
Still at his ſide is Neſtor's ſon ſurvey'd,
And lov'd Patroclus ſtill attends his ſhade.
New as they were to that infernal ſhore,
The ſuitors ſtopp'd, and gaz'd the hero o'er.
When, moving ſlow, the regal form they view'd
Of great Atrides: him in pomp purſu'd
And ſolemn ſadneſs through the gloom of hell,
The train of thoſe who by Ægyſthus fell.
O mighty chief! Pelides thus began,
Honour'd by Jove above the lot of man!

ed to ſtand at the entrance of the region of death, by which ſo many perſons had entered into it.

Ovid, in his epiſtles, mentions this Leucadian rock.

——O you that love in vain,
Fly hence, and ſeek the fair Leucadian main:
There ſtands a rock from whoſe impending ſteep,
Apollo's fane ſurveys the rolling deep;
There injur'd lovers, leaping from above,
Their flames extinguiſh, and forget to love.

v. 35. *O mighty chief! Pelides thus began*, etc.] This appears to be introduced ſomewhat unnaturally: Achilles had now been dead about ten years, and Agamemnon almoſt as long; it can therefore ſcarce be reconciled to probability, to imagine that they ſhould not have met before this time, and mutually have ſatisfied

King of a hundred kings! to whom resign'd
The strongest, bravest, greatest of mankind.

their curiosities, by relating their several stories at some former interview: Dacier indeed remarks, that we are not to imagine this conference was held at the time when the suitors descended, but upon some preceding occasion, immediately after the death of Agamemnon. If this be allowed, yet the objection remains, that the introduction is forced and unnatural, for then the descent of Mercury, and the shades of the suitors will be no reason why this conference should be here repeated: for so, neither Mercury nor the suitors hear it. But Dacier is undoubtedly in an error; for ἴδον in the original is the third person plural, and absolutely refers to Mercury and the shades of the suitors; and therefore it follows that this conference happened at the time of their entrance.

The shades of the suitors, observes Dacier, when they are summoned by Mercury out of the palace of Ulysses, emit a feeble, plaintive, inarticulate sound, τριζουσι *stridunt*: whereas Agamemnon, and the shades that have long been in the state of the dead, speak articulately. I doubt not but Homer intended to shew, by the former description, that when the soul is separated from the organs of the body, it ceases to act after the same manner, as while it was joined to it; but how the dead recover their voices afterwards is not easy to understand. In other respects Virgil paints after Homer.

——*pars tollere vocem*
Exiguam: inceptus clamor frustratus hiantes.
They rais'd a feeble cry, with trembling notes,
But the weak voice deceiv'd their gasping throats.
Dryden.

But why should we suppose, with Dacier, that these shades of the suitors have lost the faculty of speaking? I rather imagine, that the sounds they uttered were signs of com-

Com'ſt thou the firſt, to view this dreary ſtate?
And was the nobleſt the firſt mark of fate?
Condemn'd to pay the great arrear ſo ſoon,
The lot which all lament, and none can ſhun;
Oh! better hadſt thou ſunk in Trojan ground,
With all thy full-blown honours cover'd round!
Then grateful Greece with ſtreaming eyes might raiſe
Hiſtoric marbles to record thy praiſe:
Thy praiſe eternal on the faithful ſtone
Had with tranſmiſſive glories grac'd thy ſon.
But heavier fates were deſtin'd to attend:
What man is happy, till he knows his end?
O ſon of Peleus! greater than mankind!
(Thus Agamemnon's kingly ſhade rejoin'd)
Thrice happy thou; to preſs the martial plain
Midſt heaps of heroes in thy quarrel ſlain:

plaint and diſcontent, and proceeded not from an inability to ſpeak: after Patroclus was ſlain, he appears to Achilles, and ſpeaks very articulately to him; yet, to expreſs his ſorrow at his departure, he acts like theſe ſuitors: for Achilles

Like a thin ſmoke beholds the ſpirit fly,
And hears a feeble, lamentable cry.

Dacier conjectures, that the power of ſpeech ceaſes in the dead, till they are admitted into a ſtate of reſt; but Patroclus is an inſtance to the contrary in the Iliad, and Elpenor in the Odyſſey, for they both ſpeak before their funeral rites are performed, and conſequently before they enter into a ſtate of repoſe amongſt the ſhades of the happy.

In clouds of ſmoke, rais'd by the noble fray,
Great, and terrific ev'n in death you lay,
And deluges of blood flow'd round you ev'ry way.
Nor ceas'd the ſtrife, till Jove himſelf oppos'd,
And all in tempeſts the dire evening clos'd.
Then to the fleet we bore thy honour'd load,
And decent on the fun'ral bed beſtow'd.
Then unguents ſweet and tepid ſtreams we ſhed;
Tears flow'd from ev'ry eye, and o'er the dead
Each clipt the curling honours of his head.
Struck at the news, thy azure mother came;
The ſea-green ſiſters waited on the dame.
A voice of loud lament through all the main
Was heard, and terror ſeiz'd the Grecian train:

v. 56. *Great, and terrific ev'n in death*——] There is a very peculiar beauty in the verſification of Homer in this place:

——σὺ δὲ ϛροφάλιϛγι κονίης
Κεῖσο μέγας μεγαλωϛὶ.

The words μέγας μεγαλωϛὶ ſet the largeneſs of the body of Achilles ſtretched out upon the ground full before our eyes; we ſee him in the deſcription; the repetition forces it upon our obſervation, ſo that the mind has time to dwell upon it, and admire the extent of the limbs of that hero.

v. 68.——*Terror ſeiz'd the Grecian train.*] This deſcription furniſhed Ariſtarchus with another objection to this book: he thought it improbable that the appearance of Thetis, and her ſea-nymphs ſhould terrify the whole Grecian army: they ſay in anſwer, that all the ocean was in a great commotion as Theis aſcended, or, as Homer expreſſes it,

Back to the ship the frighted host had fled;
But Nestor spoke, they listen'd, and obey'd. 70

——βοὴ δ' ἔπὶ πεντον ὀρωρει
Θεσπεσίη.

This uproar occasioned their fear; the Greeks were ignorant of the cause of it, and consequently apprehended some dreadful event; this is evident, for Nestor appeases their consternation by unfolding the reason of the tumult, and shewing them that it was occasioned by the ascent of Thetis.

The reader has undoubtedly observed, how excellently Homer sustains his characters; Nestor is the wisest man, both in the Iliad and Odyssey: he has the experience of a very great age, and may therefore be supposed to be acquainted with all the most uncommon appearances in nature: the poet accordingly describes him as the only person not afraid in the Grecian army; there were others undoubtedly as brave as Nestor, but no one so wise; his intrepidity is therefore to be imputed to his wisdom, not bravery, and this furnishes us with an excellent moral; that ignorance is usually the source of fear.

The character of Achilles is no less happily supported; the same love of glory is visible in all he speaks, that distinguished his character through the Iliad: he still prefers a short life with fame, before old-age without it.

Ὡς ὄφελες τιμῆς ἀπονήμενος ἧς περ ἄναστες,
Δήμῳ ἐνὶ Τρώων θάνατον καὶ πότμον ἐπισπεῖν.

The sentiment is truly heroic; dishonour is worse than death, the happiness or misery of which is not to be measured by time, but glory; long life is but lengthened mortality, and they who live the longest have but the small privilege of creeping more leisurely than others to their graves.

(From old experience Neſtor's counſel ſprings,
And long viciſſitudes of human things.)
" Forbear your flight: fair Thetis from the main
" To mourn Achilles leads her azure train.
Around thee ſtand the daughters of the deep,
Robe thee in heav'nly veſts, and round thee weep,
Round thee, the Muſes, with alternate ſtrain,
In ever-conſecrating verſe, complain.
Each warlike Greek the moving muſic hears,
And iron-hearted heroes melt in tears.

v. 77. *Round thee, the Muſes*——] It is impoſſible, obſerves Dacier, not to be ſtruck with the noble fictions of Homer in honour of Achilles; every circumſtance is great. A whole army is in tears; the Muſes celebrate his glory; a goddeſs and her nymphs ennoble it with their preſence and lamentations. At the funerals of other heroes, women and captives are the mourners; here the muſes perſonally appear. Heaven and earth, men and gods intereſt themſelves in the obſequies of ſo great an hero! Yet from this place Ariſtarchus draws an argument for rejecting this book: Homer, ſays he, no where elſe gives the number of the nine muſes, inſinuating that their number was not fixed in his age; but Homer frequently invokes the muſes, why then ſhould he be ignorant of the number? and if not ignorant of it, why might he not mention it? Ariſtarchus further adds, that it is abſurd to imagine the body of Achilles could be preſerved ſeventeen days without burial; but this may be aſcribed to the power of Thetis, who may be eaſily ſuppoſed to preſerve it. Beſides, why might not the body be embalmed? and then there will be no occaſion for a miracle, and the interpoſition of a goddeſs: we muſt remember what ſhe did to the body of Patroclus in the Iliad.

Till ſev'nteen nights and ſev'nteen days return'd,
All that was mórtal or immortal mourn'd.
To flames we gave thee, the ſucceeding day,
And fatted ſheep and ſable oxen ſlay;
With oils and honey blaze th' augmented fires,
And like a god adorn'd, thy earthly part expires.
Unnumber'd warriors round the burning pyle
Urge the fleet courſer's or the racer's toil;
Thick clouds of duſt o'er all the circle riſe,
And the mixt clamour thunders in the ſkies.
Soon as abſorpt in all embracing flame
Sunk what was mortal of thy mighty name,
We then collect thy ſnowy bones, and place
With wines and unguents in a golden vaſe.
(The vaſe to Thetis Bacchus gave of old,
And Vulcan's art enrich'd the ſculptur'd gold)
There we thy relicks, great Achilles! blend
With dear Patroclus, thy departed friend:

v. 97. *There we thy relicks, great Achilles! blend*
With dear Patroclus, thy departed friend.]
This is agreeable to the requeſt made to Achilles by the ghoſt of Patroclus, in the Iliad,

Hear then! and as in fate and love we join,
Ah ſuffer that my bones may reſt with thine!
That golden urn thy goddeſs mother gave,
May mix our aſhes in one common grave!

It is likewiſe aſſerted by Homer, that the bones of Antilochus were repoſited in the ſame urn with thoſe of Patroclus and Achilles; where then is the peculiar honour paid to Patroclus, if Antilochus was partaker of it? The

In the ſame urn a ſep'rate ſpace contains
Thy next belov'd, Antilochus' remains.
Now all the ſons of warlike Greece ſurround
Thy deſtin'd tomb, and caſt a mighty mound:
High on the ſhore the growing hill we raiſe,
That wide th' extended Helleſpont ſurveys;
Where all, from age to age who paſs the coaſt,
May point Achilles' tomb, and hail the mighty ghoſt.
Thetis herſelf to all our peers proclaims
Heroic prizes and exequial games;
The gods aſſented; and a round thee lay
Rich ſpoils and gifts that blaz'd againſt the day.
Oft have I ſeen, with ſolemn fun'ral games,
Heroes and kings committed to the flames:
But ſtrength of youth, or valour of the brave
With nobler conteſt ne'er renown'd a grave.
Such were the games by azure Thetis given:
And ſuch thy honours, oh belov'd of heaven!

difference is, the bones of Achilles and Patroclus were mixed in the urn, thoſe of Antilochus lay ſeparately.

Homer adds, that the whole army raiſed a monument to Achilles; this is done according to his own injunctions in the Iliad, for ſpeaking of the tomb of Patroclus he thus proceeds;

Mean-time erect the tomb with pious hands,
A common ſtructure on the humble ſands;
Hereafter Greece, ſome nobler work may raiſe,
And late poſterity record our praiſe.

Achilles means, that when he is dead the Greeks ſhould raiſe one common monument to himſelf and Patroclus, which we ſee here effected.

Dear to mankind thy fame ſurvives, nor fades
Its bloom eternal in the Stygian ſhades.
But what to me avail my honours gone,
Succeſsful toils, and battles bravely won?
Doom'd by ſtern Jove, at home to end my life,
By curſt Ægyſthus, and a faithleſs wife!

Thus they; while Hermes o'er the dreary plain
Led the ſad numbers by Ulyſſes ſlain.
On each majeſtic form they caſt a view,
And tim'rous paſs'd, and awfully withdrew.
But Agamemnon, through the gloomy ſhade,
His antient hoſt Amphimedon ſurvey'd;
Son of Melanthus! he began, O ſay!
What cauſe compell'd ſo many, and ſo gay,
To tread the downward, melancholy way?
Say, could one city yield a troop ſo fair?
Were all theſe partners of one native air?
Or did the rage of ſtormy Neptune ſweep
Your lives at once, and whelm beneath the deep?
Did nightly thieves, or pyrates cruel bands,
Drench with your blood your pillag'd country's ſands?

v. 127. *But Agamemnon, through the gloomy ſhade,*
His antient hoſt Amphimedon ſurvey'd.]
An objection has been raiſed againſt this paſſage, and it has been thought an abſurdity that Agamemnon ſhould be the gueſt of Amphimedon, and not of Ulyſſes, when he came to make an addreſs to him, and was within his territories. Didymus anſwers, that this conduct in Agamemnon was occaſioned by the refuſal of Ulyſſes to aſſiſt in the war of Troy: Agamemnon reſented his denial, and went to the houſe of Amphimedon.

Or well-defending ſome beleaguer'd wall,
Say, for the public did ye greatly fall?
Inform thy gueſt; for ſuch I was of yore,
When our triumphant navies touch'd your ſhore;
Forc'd a long month the wintry ſeas to bear,
To move the great Ulyſſes to the war.
O king of men! I faithful ſhall relate
(Reply'd Amphimedon) our hapleſs fate,
Ulyſſes abſent, our ambitious aim
With rival loves purſu'd his royal dame;

v. 142. *Forc'd a long month——*
To move the great Ulyſſes to the war.]

It is not obvious why Ulyſſes, who was a perſon of the greateſt bravery, ſhould be unwilling to engage in ſuch an action of glory, as the war of Troy: was it becauſe he foreſaw that it would be a work of danger, as Euſtathius imagines, or was he diſſatisfied in the ground of it, which was only to revenge the rape of Helen, and nothing but a private injury? the former is a reaſon unworthy of his heroic character, the latter is no more than a conjecture. It may poſſibly be a truer reaſon, that he was unwilling to forſake his wife, of whom he was very fond, and whom he newly had married; but then it muſt be allowed, that he prefers his love to his glory. Euſtathius recites the manner how he was drawn to engage in the war of Troy: Ulyſſes to deliver himſelf from the importunities of his friends to aſſiſt Agamemnon, pretended madneſs, and yoked two animals of a different kind to a plough, and began to work with them; Palamedes, who ſuſpected the impoſture, took his ſon Telemachus, an infant, and laid him in the furrow before the plough; Ulyſſes turned aſide not to hurt his child, and this diſcovered the impoſition. Ariſtotle takes notice of the great judgment of Homer in ſuppreſſing this incident concerning Ulyſſes, it being unworthy of the bravery of an hero: he is proving, chap. 8. of his

Her coy reserve, and prudence mixt with pride,
Our common suit nor granted, nor deny'd;
But close with inward hate our deaths design'd;
Vers'd in all arts of wily womankind.
Her hand, laborious in delusion, spread
A spacious loom, and mix'd the various thread;
Ye peers, she cry'd, who press to gain my heart
Where dead Ulysses claims no more a part,
Yet a short space, your rival suit suspend,
Till this funereal web my labours end:
Cease, till to good Laertes I bequeath
A task of grief, his ornaments of death:
Lest, when the fates his royal ashes claim,
The Grecian matrons taint my spotless fame;

Poetics, that all the actions of an hero's life are not to be inserted in an epic poem, for the actions of the same man are so many and different, that we can never reduce them to unity: for this reason Homer mentions not all the adventures of Ulysses, but only such as have relation to the subject of the Odyssey; he knew that this counterfeit madness had no connection either in truth or probability with the subject of his poem, and therefore he forbears the mention of it. The reader will understand the meaning of Aristotle, if he considers that the subject of the Odyssey is the story of a person who suffers great calamities in the return to his country, before he establishes himself in his dominions: now, the counterfeited madness of Ulysses has no connection with these sufferings, and consequently is judiciously omited by Homer as foreign to the design of the poem, and contrary to the unity of the action. A detail of all the adventures of an hero's life is the province of history; the relation of one single great, and surprizing action is the subject of epic poetry.

Should he, long honour'd with supreme command,
Want the last duties of a daughter's hand.
The fiction pleas'd: our gen'rous train complies,
Nor fraud mistrusts in virtue's fair disguise.
The work she ply'd; but studious of delay,
Each following night revers'd the toils of day.
Unheard, unseen, three years her arts prevail;
The fourth, her maid reveal'd th' amazing tale,
And show'd, as unperceiv'd we took our stand,
The backward labours of her faithless hand.
Forc'd, she completes it; and before us lay
The mingled web, whose gold and silver ray
Display'd the radiance of the night and day.
Just as she finish'd her illustrious toil,
Ill fortune led Ulysses to our isle.
Far in a lonely nook, beside the sea,
At an old swineherd's rural lodge he lay:
Thither his son from sandy Pyle repairs,
And speedy lands, and secretly confers.
They plan our future ruin, and resort
Confed'rate, to the city and the court.
First came the son; the father next succeeds,
Clad like a beggar, whom Eumæus leads;
Propt on a staff, deform'd with age and care,
And hung with rags, that flutter'd in the air.
Who could Ulysses in that form behold?
Scorn'd by the young, forgotten by the old,
Ill us'd by all! to ev'ry wrong resign'd.
Patient he suffer'd with a constant mind.

But when, arising in his wrath t'obey
The will of Jove, he gave the vengeance way:
The scatter'd arms that hung around the dome
Careful he treasur'd in a private room:
Then, to her suitors bade his queen propose
The archer's strife: the source of future woes,

v. 195. *Then, to her suitors bade his queen propose*, etc.] We have already seen, that it was the contrivance of Penelope to propose the bow, to gain time to defer the marriage hour; how then comes Amphimedon to ascribe it to the art of Ulysses? Eustathius answers, that Amphimedon is in an error, and that though the contrivance was from Penelope, yet Amphimedon could not come to the knowledge of it; and such stratagems being agreeable to the character of Ulysses, he imputes the action to him rather than Penelope.

It is impossible not to take notice that Homer makes repetition after repetition: Agamemnon speaks the same words, as in the eleventh Odyssey: Amphimedon the same, as in the second; and the whole account of the suitors destruction is no more than a recital of what the reader already knows. Was Homer tired at the end of his work, and would not give himself the labour of invention? I confess we may lose our appetite to see the same entertainment thus continually served up in the very same manner, without so much as new garnishment. I fear the words of Ulysses may sometimes be applicable to Homer.

And what so tedious as a twice told tale?

Besides, this whole infernal interview is merely ornamental, which the poet was at liberty to insert or omit according to his judgment, without breaking the thread of the principal action; it might therefore be wished that he had substituted some other incident in the room of it, and given a greater diversity to the story: if by laying the scene

And omen of our death! in vain we drew
The twanging ſtring, and try'd the ſtubborn yew:
To none it yields but great Ulyſſes' hands;
In vain we threat; Telemachus commands:
The bow he ſnatch'd, and in an inſtant bent;
Through ev'ry ring the victor arrow went.

in hell, he deſigned to raiſe the wonder and curioſity of the reader, (who cannot fail of having his attention awakened to ſee a proſpect opened beyond the bounds of nature, and to look into the ſtate of departed heroes) yet it muſt be confeſſed that this deſign has already been fully executed in the eleventh of the Odyſſey. But the poet ſeems to introduce the deſcent for the information of the dead rather than the living; Agamemnon is told how the ſuitors were deſtroyed by Ulyſſes; and Achilles how nobly the Greeks performed his funeral obſequies; incidents that very little contribute to the ſtory of the Odyſſey. In ſhort, the main action ſtands ſtill during this whole epiſode, which takes up almoſt half the book, and the latter part of the epiſode preſents no new object to amuſe and entertain us. But,

——————*Cynthius aurem*
Vellit——————

I betray my own want of judgment, rather than diſcover Homer's errors. I will only add, that the reader will be fully convinced that this whole epiſode may be omitted, by obſerving how well the ſtory will be carried on with a regular connection by beginning the book with theſe words,

Οἱ δ' ἔπτα ἐκ πόλιος κάλεσαν, τάχα δ' ἀγχοῦ ἴκοντο, etc.

So that if I could in any part ſubſcribe to the opinion of Ariſtarchus for the rejection of this book, it ſhould be only for the former part of it; but I am perſuaded, from the nobleneſs of the verſes, that the whole is genuine,

Fierce on the threſheld then in arms he ſtood;
Pour'd forth the darts, that thirſted for our blood,
And frown'd before us, dreadful as a god!
Firſt bleeds Antinous: thick the ſhafts reſound;
And heaps on heaps the wretches ſtrow the ground;
This way, and that, we turn, we fly, we fall;
Some god aſſiſted, and unmann'd us all:
Ignoble cries precede the dying groans;
And batter'd brains and blood beſmear the ſtones.
Thus great Atrides! thus Ulyſſes drove
The ſhades thou ſeeſt, from yon' fair realms above.
Our mangled bodies now deform'd with gore,
Cold and neglected, ſpread the marble floor.
No friend to bathe our wounds! or tears to ſhed
O'er the pale corſe! the honours of the dead.
Oh bleſt Ulyſſes (thus the king expreſt
His ſudden rapture) in thy conſort bleſt!
Not more thy wiſdom, than her virtue, ſhin'd;
Not more thy patience, than her conſtant mind.
Icarius' daughter, glory of the paſt,
And model to the future age, ſhall laſt:
The gods, to honour her fair fame, ſhall raiſe
(Their great reward) a poet in her praiſe.
Not ſuch, oh Tyndarus! thy daughter's deed;
By whoſe dire hand her king and huſband bled:
Her ſhall the muſe to infamy prolong,
Example dread! and theme of tragic ſong!
The gen'ral ſex ſhall ſuffer in her ſhame,
And ev'n the beſt that bears a woman's name.

Thus in the regions of eternal ſhade
Conferr'd the mournful phantoms of the dead.

v. 232. *Thus in the regions of eternal ſhade.*] I think it will not be improper here to particularize from whence antiquity raiſed the fictions concerning hell, and the nature of it, as we have it in Diodorus Siculus.

Pluto, obſerves that author, was the firſt that introduced the rites of ſepulture, and other ceremonies beſtowed on the dead: this is the reaſon why the ancients imagined him to be the king of the dead.

Rhadamanthus is ſaid to have been the moſt juſt man in the world; he ſeverely puniſhed robbers and other notorious offenders, and from his ſingular reputation for integrity was feigned to be the judge of the good and bad after death; and for the ſame reaſon Minos was joined with him in the ſame dignity.

Homer borrowed his fictions from Orpheus, Orpheus from the Ægyptians: it was Orpheus who introduced the opinion of the pains of the damned, and of the Elyſian fields, and taught that the ſouls of the dead were conducted by Mercury into the infernal manſions: (a proof that he was called ψυχοπομπος before the days of Homer.) Diodorus proceeds and mentions the beginning of this book, how Homer feigns that Mercury leads the ſhades of the dead by the ocean, the Leucadian rock, and the gates of the ſun: a plain inſtance that he looked upon this book as the genuine work of Homer. All theſe fables, continues Diodorus, are of Ægyptian extract; by the ocean, Homer means Nilus; by the gates of the ſun, he means Heliopolis, a city ſacred to the ſun; the meadow into which the ſhades are conducted, denotes the pleaſant meadows full of canes adjoining to Memphis; and the dead are feigned to reſide there, becauſe it was the general burial place amongſt the Ægyptians. Concerning Cocytus, Acheron, *etc.* the reader may conſult the firſt note upon the eleventh Odyſſey.

While from the town, Ulyſſes, and his band,
Paſt to Laertes' cultivated land.

Plutarch, in his treatiſe of Iſis and Oſyris, agrees with Diodorus concerning the extraction of theſe fables from Ægypt, and mentions at Memphis the gates of lamentation and oblivion; that is, of Lethe and Cocytus; which being opened at the burial of the dead, give a doleful and groaning ſound. From hence they are thus deſcribed by Homer in the tenth Odyſſey.

And where flow rolling from the Stygian bed
Cocytus' lamentable waters ſpread,
Where the dark rock o'erhangs th' infernal lake,
And mingling ſtreams eternal murmurs make.

Theſe obſervations give light to moſt of Homer's fictions concerning hell, and ſhew that his poetry is built upon the cuſtoms of antiquity.

Macrobius explains all theſe particulars after a different manner: this ſolution ſuppoſes a ſtate of pre-exiſtence of the ſoul: 'If, ſays that author, to die be the ſame as 'to go to the infernal regions; to enjoy the ſupernal, is 'then to live; and therefore before philoſophy prevailed, the body itſelf was ſuppoſed to be the infernal receptacle of the ſoul, into which ſhe deſcended as into a 'priſon, from above; this was thought the ſepulchre of 'the ſoul, and the cave of Pluto. The river of oblivion 'denotes the error of the ſoul, which forgets the majeſty of the former ſtate ſhe enjoyed before ſhe entered 'the body: Phlegethon, the ardour of our deſires, and 'flames of anger; Acheron, all our words and actions 'that bring us into ſorrows; ſo likewiſe, Styx implies 'our hatred, Cocytus our grief and lamentation. Thus 'alſo the puniſhments in hell are verified upon earth: 'the vultur which preys upon the liver of Tityus, is the 'ſting of a guilty conſcience; the ambitious man is the 'Siſyphus, who is eternally aſpiring, and yet always diſ-

The ground himſelf had purchas'd with his pain,
And labour made the rugged ſoil a plain.
There ſtood his manſion of the rural ſort,
With uſeful buildings round the lowly court:
Where the few ſervants that divide his care,
Took their laborious reſt, and homely fare;
And one Sicilian matron, old and ſage,
With conſtant duty tends his drooping age.

' appointed; the avaritious man is the Tantalus who ' ſtarves amidſt his plenty,' *etc.*

By joining theſe two interpretations together, we have at once the double pleaſure of a beautiful fable and inſtructive moral; from the whole we may collect, that although the ancients were ignorant of the true nature of a future ſtate, yet that they believed it, and expected there would be puniſhments and rewards in it. This note is of uſe to explain ſeveral paſſages in the eleventh Odyſſey.

v. 236. *The ground himſelf had purchas'd with his pain.*] Euſtathius very well explains theſe words, in which the Greek may be conſtrued to ſignify that Laertes had purchaſed this place of retirement by his labour and induſtry: but probably Homer intends to expreſs an allotment or portion of ground which was aſſigned Laertes by the public, as a reward of his heroic labours in war, and bravery in conquering his enemies, like that mentioned in the Iliad.

The Lycians grant a choſen ſpace of ground,
With woods, with vineyards, and with harveſts crown'd.

It may either be ſo, or Homer intending ſolely to paint the laborious life of Laertes, added this circumſtance of his encreaſing his rural cell by his induſtry, as an inſtance of it; though the latter is more ſuitable to the character of a king.

Here now arriving, to his ruſtic band
And martial ſon, Ulyſſes gave command.
Enter the houſe, and of the briſtly ſwine
Seleƈt the largeſt to the Pow'rs divine.
Alone, and unattended, let me try
If yet I ſhare the old man's memory:
If thoſe dim eyes can yet Ulyſſes know,
(Their light and deareſt objeƈt long ago)
Now chang'd with time, with abſence, and with woe?
Then to his train he gives his ſpear and ſhield;
The houſe they enter, and he ſeeks the field;
Through rows of ſhade with various fruitage crown'd,
And labour'd ſcenes of richeſt verdure round.
Nor aged Dolius, nor his ſons were there,
Nor ſervants, abſent on another care;
To ſearch the woods for ſets of flow'ry thorn,
Their orchard bounds to ſtrengthen and adorn.
But all alone the hoary king he found;
His habit coarſe, but warmly wrapt around;
His head, that bow'd with many a penſive care,
Fenc'd with a double cap of goat-ſkin hair:
His buſkins old, in former ſervice torn,
But well repair'd; and gloves againſt the thorn.

v 266.——*Gloves againſt the thorn.*] Caſaubon, in his remarks upon Athenæus, lib. 12. cap. 2. affirms, that antiently neither the Greeks nor the Romans ever wore any covering on their hands, which are now uſed ſo univerſally, that they are worn by the meaneſt people; but this place is an inſtance of Caſaubon's miſtake: it is true, Xenophon gives this praƈtice as an argument of the

In this array the kingly gard'ner ſtood,
And clear'd a plant, encumber'd with its wood.

luxury and delicacy of the Perſians, who ſuffered no part of the body to be expoſed to the air, but wore καὶ περὶ ἄκρας ταῖς χερσὶ χειρίδας, καὶ δακτυλήθρας ἔχοντι, 'gloves 'upon their hands, and coverings upon their very fingers.' Pliny the younger mentions the ſame cuſtom among the Romans, *Manus Hieme manicis muniebantur! ut ne coeli quidem aſperitas ullum ſtudiis tempus eriperet.* This then is the difference; the Perſians wore theſe hand coverings out of effeminacy and delicacy: whereas in Greece they were uſed only out of neceſſity, as a defence in rural labour, as appears from Laertes, they being never mentioned upon any other occaſion, either in the Iliad or Odyſſey. Dacier.

v. 267. *In this array the kingly gard'ner ſtood,*
And clear'd a plant, encumber'd with its wood.]

This is the firſt appearance of Laertes; he is the very picture of melancholy, his dreſs, his employ, and ſolitary life, all diſcover a fixed ſorrow and contempt of the world. It has been a diſpute whether we are to aſcribe this retreat of Laertes to a meanneſs of ſpirit, who forſakes his ſtation, and is unequal to adverſity; or to wiſdom, and a noble neglect of the pomp and ſplendor of the world, by which he prefers a little rural retreat to all the magnificence of a palace, and a ſmall garden to all the dominions of a king. Plutarch ſeverely cenſures his conduct: 'A perſon, obſerves that writer, who waſtes 'his age in his bed, or in trivial affairs, makes himſelf an 'object of contempt, as Homer teaches by the examples 'of Neſtor and Laertes: Neſtor, by engaging in the war 'of Troy, obtained the utmoſt veneration; while Laertes, who abandoned himſelf to ſolitude, was deſpiſed 'univerſally.' I am unwilling to ſubſcribe to this obſervation, being of opinion, that the ſilent virtues of a good man in ſolitude are more amiable than all the noiſy honours of active life. The picture of Laertes is undoubt-

Beneath a neighb'ring tree, the chief divine
Gaz'd o'er his fire, retracing ev'ry line,

edly drawn very naturally; a tender father is afflicted for the loss of a brave and beloved son, this bitter ingredient gives a disrelish to all the vanities of life; he is deprived of an object that he valued above the world, he therefore neglects it as having nothing worthy of his cares, and abandons it for privacy and tranquillity. Menedemus in Terence is the very copy of Laertes in Homer; an instance that he thought Homer's an exact representation of human nature: and the applause with which that comedy was received, shews that all Rome was of the same judgment. Sorrow loves to be alone, rather seeks for amusements than business and glory; and it may perhaps be true, that it shews more greatness of soul to resign a kingdom than to conquer it. Pride, ambition, and guilty passions have raised many to the top of human glory; but it evidences that a person is not influenced by vicious sentiments, who knows how to moderate his desires, and is able to retire from the splendor of a crown into obscurity. Tully mentions the manner of life in Laertes, without condemnation; the place is to be found in his Cato Major, where he speaks of the innocent amusements of old age, and illustrates his assertions by the example of Laertes. *Homerus Laertem lenientem desiderium, quod capiebat e filio, colentem agrum et stercorantem facit.* But Tully mistakes Homer, for Laertes is not found dunging his ground.

Perhaps instead of λιτρεύοντα, he read κοπρεύοντα, as it is used in the seventeenth Odyssey.

——— Ὀδυσσῆος τέμενος μέγα κοπρήσοντες.

Or perhaps he quoted by memory. I will only add, that Tully in his retirement at Tusculum, used to write to his friends, that he there led the life of Laertes: and Tully was too sensible of his own worth, to speak any thing to the disparagement of it.

The ruins of himself! now worn away
With age, yet still majestic in decay!
Sudden his eyes releas'd their wat'ry store;
The much enduring man could bear no more.
Doubtful he stood, if instant to embrace
His aged limbs, to kiss his rev'rend face,
With eager transport to disclose the whole,
And pour at once the torrent of his soul?
Not so: his judgment takes the winding way
Of question distant, and of soft essay,

v. 279. *Not so: his judgment takes the winding way*] It has been objected, that Ulysses here acts contrary to filial piety, and permits a tender father to continue in his sorrows, when it was in his power immediately to make him happy, by a discovery of his person; they likewise condemn the κερτόμια ἔπεα, which Homer puts into the mouth of Ulysses. It must be allowed, that those words are frequently used by the poet in a bad sense, and signify *heart-wounding*, or *reproachful words*; but here they are not so to be understood; they only imply, *that Ulysses blamed Laertes out of tenderness for taking no more care of his person*: this is not a reproach, but the language of fondness and affection: or perhaps the poet meant to express that this inquiry raised images of sorrow in the soul of Laertes, and *wounded his heart* by naming the lost Ulysses. Eustathius solves the former objection by saying, that Ulysses delayed the discovery, lest the suddenness of joy should prove fatal to Laertes. But Homer undoubtedly paints according to nature; Ulysses bursts into tears at the sight of his father, yet restrains them, and tries if, after twenty years absence, he was known by him; this delay raises the reader's curiosity, makes him as it were, present at the interview, and impatient to hear the manner of the discovery: besides, this procedure excellently agrees with the general character of Ulysses, who is, upon

More gentle methods on weak age employs,
And moves the ſorrows to enhance the joys.
Then to his ſire with beating heart he moves.
And with a tender pleaſantry reproves:
Who digging round the plant ſtill hangs his head,
Nor ought remits the work, while thus he ſaid.
Great is thy ſkill, oh father! great thy toil,
Thy careful hand is ſtampt on all the ſoil,
Thy ſquadron'd vineyards well thy art declare
The olive green, blue fig, and pendent pear;
And not one empty ſpot eſcapes thy care.
On ev'ry plant and tree thy cares are ſhown,
Nothing neglected, but thyſelf alone.
Forgive me, father, if this fault I blame;
Age ſo advanc'd may ſome indulgence claim.
Not for thy ſloth, I deem thy lord unkind;
Nor ſpeaks thy form a mean or ſervile mind:
I read a monarch in that princely air,
The ſame thy aſpect, if the ſame thy care;

all emergencies, maſter of his paſſions, and remarkable for diſguiſe, and an artful diſſimulation; this diſguiſe has a very happy effect in this place, it holds us in a pleaſing ſuſpence, and makes us wait with attention to ſee the iſſue of the interview.

v. 298. *I read a monarch in that princely air.*] The words in the Greek are not without obſcurity, and Euſtathius explains them two ways; they may either ſignify, that Laertes appears to be a perſon of ſuch diſtinction that he ought to live with more delicacy and dignity, viz. *to bathe, and after a due repaſt to ſleep in ſtate*; or they imply, that Laertes ſhews the dignity of a king in his perſon, who comes from the bath, and dines in ſtate. Ulyſſes

Soft ſleep, fair garments, and the joys of wine,
Theſe are the rights of age, and ſhould be thine.
Who then thy maſter, ſay? and whoſe the land
So dreſs'd and manag'd by thy ſkilful hand?
But chief, oh tell me! (what I queſtion moſt)
Is this the far-fam'd Ithacenſian coaſt?
For ſo reported the firſt man I view'd,
(Some ſurly iſlander, of manners rude)
Nor farther conference vouchſaf'd to ſtay;
Heedleſs he whiſtled, and purſu'd his way.
But thou! whom years have taught to underſtand,
Humanely hear and anſwer my demand:
A friend I ſeek, a wiſe one and a brave,
Say, lives he yet, or moulders in the grave?
Time was (my fortunes then were at the beſt)
When at my houſe I lodg'd this foreign gueſt;
He ſaid, from Ithaca's fair iſle he came,
And old Laertes was his father's name.
To him, whatever to a gueſt is ow'd
I paid, and hoſpitable gifts beſtow'd;
To him ſev'n talents of pure ore I told,
Twelve cloaks, twelve veſts, twelve tunics ſtiff with gold,
A bowl, that rich with poliſh'd ſilver flames,
And, ſkill'd in female works, four lovely dames.

cannot compare Laertes to a king who is freſh from the bath, and dreſt royally, for he tells us, he is covered with ſweat and duſt; he therefore means that his perſonage is noble, and like a king, that therefore he ought to live like a king, with reſpect to his food and his bath, and to indulge his age by allowing it eaſe and refreſhment.

At this the father, with a father's fears:
(His venerable eyes bedimm'd with tears)
This is the land; but ah! thy gifts are loſt,
For godleſs men, and rude, poſſeſs the coaſt:
Sunk is the glory of this once-fam'd ſhore!
Thy antient friend, oh ſtranger, is no more!
Full recompence thy bounty elſe had born;
For ev'ry good man yields a juſt return:
So civil rights demand; and who begins
The track of friendſhip, not purſuing, ſins.
But tell me, ſtranger, be the truth confeſt,
What years have circled ſince thou ſaw'ſt that gueſt?
That hapleſs gueſt, alas! for ever gone!
Wretch that he was! and that I am! my ſon!
If ever man to miſery was born,
'Twas his to ſuffer, and 'tis mine to mourn!
Far from his friends, and from his native reign,
He lies a prey to monſters of the main,
Or ſavage beaſts his mangled reliques tear,
Or ſcreaming vulturs ſcatter through the air:
Nor could his mother fun'ral unguents ſhed,
Nor wail'd his father o'er th' untimely dead,
Nor his ſad conſort on the mournful bier,
Seal'd his cold eyes, or dropp'd a tender tear!
But tell me, who thou art? and what thy race?
Thy town, thy parents, and thy native place?
Or if a merchant in purſuit of gain,
What port receiv'd thy veſſel from the main?
Or com'ſt thou ſingle, or attend thy train?

Then thus the ſon. From Alybas I came,
My palace there; Eperitus my name.
Not vulgar born, from Aphidas the king
Of Polyphemon's royal line I ſpring.
Some adverſe dæmon from Sicania bore
Our wand'ring courſe, and drove us on your ſhore:
Far from the town, an unfrequented bay
Reliev'd our weary'd veſſel from the ſea.
Five years have circled ſince theſe eyes purſu'd
Ulyſſes parting through the ſable flood;
Proſp'rous he ſail'd, with dexter auguries,
And all the wing'd good omens of the ſkies.
Well hop'd we then to meet on this fair ſhore,
Whom heav'n, alas! decreed to meet no more.
Quick through the father's heart theſe accents ran;
Grief ſeiz'd at once, and wrap'd up all the man;
Deep from his ſoul he ſigh'd, and ſorrowing ſpread
A cloud of aſhes on his hoary head.

v. 353. ——— *From Alybas I came.*] Ulyſſes is inexhauſtible in his fictions; he here accommodates the names of perſons and places to his fortunes: Alybas is ſuppoſed to be a city of Italy, afterwards called Metapontium. It is placed by others in Thrace. It is here introduced, to denote the wanderings of Ulyſſes by the ſea, or ἅλη: the word *Aphidas*, denotes his generoſity, which *ſpares nothing* towards his friends. He feigns himſelf to be the grandſon of Πολυπήμων, to repreſent the multitude of his ſufferings; his name is Eperitus from ἐπήρειστος, the ſame with περιμάχητος, from ἐρίζω, to ſhew the ſtruggle that he has met with in all his adventures, as well as the toils in the war of Troy, and againſt other enemies. Euſtathius.

Trembling with agonies of ſtrong delight
Stood the great ſon, heart-wounded with the ſight:

v. 369. ——*and ſorrowing ſpread*
A cloud of aſhes on his hoary head.] This was a common practice amongſt the antient orientals, in token of the extremity of ſorrow; it was uſed amongſt the Hebrews, as well as Greeks; thus Ezek. xxviii. 30. "They ſhall caſt duſt upon their heads." Job ii. 12. "They rent every one his mantle, and ſprinkled duſt up-"on their heads." Thus alſo Achilles in the eighteenth of the Iliad;

His purple garments, and his golden hairs,
Thoſe he deforms in duſt, and theſe he tears.

Homer calls it κόνιν αἰθαλόεσσαν, which does not mean that Laertes threw glowing embers on his head, for he was in his garden, where ſuch aſhes were not to be found; but he means ξηρὴν, or *dry duſt*, ſuch as ariſes from ſubſtances conſumed by fire, or reſembling aſhes. Euſtathius.

v. 371. *Trembling with agonies*, etc.] The Greek expreſſion is remarkable,

——ἀνὰ ῥῖνας δὲ οἱ ἤδη
Δριμὺ μένος πεφύτυψε——

A ſharp ſenſation ſtruck his noſtrils, Euſtathius judges, that the meaning is, that Ulyſſes perceived himſelf ready to burſt into tears; a kind of a pricking ſharp ſenſation being felt in the noſtrils before the eruption of tears. Caſaubon more fully explains it; he obſerves, that all violent paſſions cauſe a ſenſation in the noſtrils, ariſing from the ebullition of the ſpirits, which mount toward the brain, and endeavouring to free themſelves from reſtraint, find a vent by the noſtril, and crouding through it, dilate it in their paſſage; this is evident from animals, and the nobler kinds of them, as the bull, the horſe, the lion, whoſe noſtrils always dilate when moved to anger. A ſi-

He ran, he seiz'd him with a strict embrace,
With thousand kisses wander'd o'er his face,
I, I am he; oh father! rise, behold
Thy son, with twenty winters now grown old;
Thy son, so long desir'd, so long detain'd,
Restor'd, and breathing in his native land:
These floods of sorrow, oh my sire, restrain!
The vengeance is compleat; the suitor train,
Stretch'd in our palace, by these hands lie slain.
Amaz'd, Laertes. "Give some certain sign,
"If such thou art, to manifest thee mine."
Lo here the wound, he cries, receiv'd of yore,
The scar indented by the tusky boar,
When by thyself and by Anticlea sent,
To old Autolychus's realms I went.
Yet by another sign thy offspring know;
The several trees you gave me long ago,

milar expression is found in the first Idyllium of Theocritus.

Καὶ ὁ μὲν δεινεῖα χολὰ ποτὶ ῥινὶ κάθηται.

He speaks of the anger of the god Pan, but it is applicable to all violence of passion. Aristotle, observes Dacier, quotes this verse as applied by Homer to express anger, cap. 8. of his morals to Nicomachus; but he is evidently in an error; for there is here no mention of anger: he undoubtedly trusted to his memory, it being sorrow arising from filial tenderness which moves Ulysses. Dacier.

v. 389. *The several trees you gave me long ago,*
While yet a child———]

The word in the original is παιδὸς, which signifies *a very young boy*: Homer uses it to express the age, when out of a childish simplicity Ulysses asked his father to

While, yet a child, these fields I lov'd to trace,
And trod thy footsteps with unequal pace:
To ev'ry plant in order as we came,
Well-pleas'd you told its nature, and its name,
Whate'er my childish fancy ask'd, bestow'd;
Twelve pear trees bowing with their pendent load,
And ten, that red with blushing apples glow'd;
Full fifty purple figs; and many a row
Of various vines that then began to blow,
A future vintage! when the Hours produce
Their latent buds, and Sol exalts the juice.
Smit with the signs which all his doubts explain,
His heart within him melts; his knees sustain
Their feeble weight no more; his arms alone
Support him, round the lov'd Ulysses thrown;
He faints, he sinks, with mighty joys oppress:
Ulysses clasps him to his eager breast.

grant him such trees. Such requests are very natural in children, and we see, says Dacier, the same practised every day; parents out of fondness indulge the requests of their children in such little particularities; and a bird, an horse, *etc.* continues the child's favourite for many years. It must be allowed, that no poet ever followed nature so faithfully as Homer. Virgil perhaps has reached his noblest elevations and sublimities, but there is a greater variety of natural incidents, more exact pictures of human life in Homer than in all other poets. Some painters excel in the boldness of their figures, and know how to draw a hero or a god, but are less happy in lower subjects; but Homer draws universally, and is excellent upon all occasions; he paints the largest figures, or the least sketches, equally natural, and with equal beauty.

Soon as returning life regains its seat,
And his breath lengthens, and his pulses beat;
Yes, I believe, he cries, almighty Jove!
Heav'n rules us yet, and gods there are above.
'Tis so——the suitors for their wrongs have paid——
But what shall guard us, if the town invade?
If while the news through ev'ry city flies,
All Ithaca and Cephalenia rise;
To this Ulysses. As the gods shall please
Be all the rest; and set thy soul at ease.
Haste to the cottage by this orchard side,
And take the banquet which our cares provide:
There wait thy faithful band of rural friends,
And there the young Telemachus attends.
Thus having said, they trac'd the garden o'er,
And stooping enter'd at the lowly door.
The swains and young Telemachus they found,
The victim portion'd, and the goblet crown'd.
The hoary king his old Sicilian maid
Perfum'd and wash'd, and gorgeously array'd.
Pallas attending gives his frame to shine
With awful port, and majesty divine;
His gazing son admires the godlike grace,
And air celestial dawning o'er his face.
What god, he cry'd, my father's form improves?
How high he treads, and how enlarg'd he moves!
Oh! would to all the deathless pow'rs on high,
Pallas and Jove, and him who gilds the sky!
(Reply'd the king elated with his praise)
My strength were still, as once in better days:

When the bold Chepalens the leaguer form'd,
And proud Nericus trembled as I ſtorm'd.
Such were I now, not abſent from your deed
When the laſt ſun beheld the ſuitors bleed,
This arm had aided yours; this hand beſtrown
Our floors with death, and puſh'd the ſlaughter on;
Nor had the ſire been ſep'rate from the ſon.

They commun'd thus; while homeward bent their way
Their ſwains, fatigu'd with labours of the day;
Dolius the firſt, the venerable man,
And next his ſons, a long ſucceeding train,
For due refection to the bow'r they came,
Call'd by the careful old Sicilian dame,

v. 438. *And proud Nericus trembled as I ſtorm'd.*] I doubt not but the reader has obſerved, that Laertes uſes the very turn of language and manner of ſelf-commendation ſo remarkable in almoſt all the ſpeeches of Neſtor: this is to be aſcribed to the nature of old-age in general, which loves a little to boaſt, and relates the exploits of youth with the utmoſt ſatisfaction; or, as Horace deſcribes it,

——————*Laudator temporis acti*
Se puero——————

I will only add, that the reaſon why Homer deſcribed Laertes enlarged with ſtrength and majeſty by Minerva is to reconcile the future ſtory to probability; Laertes acts the hero, engages at the head of his friends, and kills the leader of his enemies; this might appear to be an exploit too great for a weak old man waſted away with ſorrows: the poet therefore knowing that he had loſt his natural vigour through age, ſupplies the defect with preternatural ſtrength, and by this method renders him equal to his future actions.

Who nurs'd the children, and now tends the fire;
They see their lord, they gaze, and they admire.
On chairs and beds in order seated round,
They share the gladsome board; the roofs resound.
While thus Ulysses to his antient friend:
"Forbear your wonder, and the feast attend;
"The rites have waited long." The chief commands
Their loves in vain; old Dolius spreads his hands,
Springs to his master with a warm embrace,
And fastens kisses on his hands and face:
Then thus broke out. Oh long, oh daily mourn'd!
Beyond our hopes, and to our wish, return'd!
Conducted sure by heav'n! for heav'n alone
Could work this wonder: welcome to thy own!
And joys and happiness attend thy throne!
Who knows thy bless'd, thy wish'd return? oh say
To the chaste queen shall we the news convey?
Or hears she, and with blessings loads the day?
Dismiss that care, for to the royal bride
Already is it known (the king reply'd,
And strait resum'd his seat;) while round him bows
Each faithful youth, and breathes out ardent vows:
Then all beneath their father take their palce,
Rank'd by their ages, and the banquet grace.

v. 451. *Who nurs'd the children, and now tends the fire.*] We are not to imagine that this Sicilian was the wife of Dolius; Homer gives her the title of mother to his children, because she had the care of their education; for he adds, ἡ σφέας τρέφε, she was their nurse, not their mother. Dacier.

Now flying fame the ſwift report had ſpread
Through all the city, of the ſuitors dead.
In throngs they riſe, and to the palace croud;
Their ſighs were many, and the tumult loud.
Weeping they bear the mangled heaps of ſlain,
Inhume the natives in their native plain.
The reſt in ſhips are wafted o'er the main.
Then ſad in council all the ſeniors ſate,
Frequent and full, aſſembled to debate.
Amid the circle firſt Eupithes roſe,
Big was his eye with tears, his heart with woes:
The bold Antinous was his age's pride,
The firſt who by Ulyſſes' arrow dy'd.
Down his wan cheek the trickling torrent ran,
As mixing words with ſighs, he thus began.
Great deeds, oh friends! this wond'rous man has wrought,
And mighty bleſſings to his country brought.
With ſhips he parted and a num'rous train,
Thoſe, and their ſhips, he bury'd in the main.
Now he returns, and firſt eſſays his hand
In the beſt blood of all his native land.

v. 481. *The reſt in ſhips are wafted o'er the main.*] To underſtand this we muſt remember, that many of the ſuitors came from the neighbouring iſlands, Samos, Zacynthus, *etc.* and therefore they are ſaid to be tranſported by ſea, to be buried in their native countries: this cuſtom prevailed over all the oriental world: but there may be a particular reaſon why this is done by the Ithacans; they might intend to raiſe thoſe ſeveral iſlands to engage againſt Ulyſſes, and draw them to arms by ſuch moving ſpectacles. Dacier.

Haſte then, and ere to neighb'ring Pyle he flies,
Or ſacred Elis, to procure ſupplies;
Ariſe (or ye for ever fall) ariſe!
Shame to this age, and all that ſhall ſucceed!
If unreveng'd your ſons and brothers bleed.
Prove that we live, by vengeance on his head,
Or ſink at once forgotten with the dead.
Here ceas'd he, but indignant tears let fall
Spoke when he ceas'd: dumb ſorrow touch'd them all.
When from the palace to the wond'ring throng
Sage Medon came, and Phemius came along;
(Reſtleſs and early ſleep's ſoft bands they broke)
And Medon firſt th' aſſembled chiefs beſpoke.
Hear me, ye peers and elders of the land,
Who deem this act the work of mortal hand;
As o'er the heaps of death Ulyſſes ſtrode.
Theſe eyes, theſe eyes beheld a preſent god,

v. 509. *Hear me, ye peers and elders of the land.*] There is great art in the ſpeeches of Medon and Eupithes: Eupithes ſaid that Ulyſſes had ſlain the braveſt of the Greeks; Medon allows it, but adds, that it was done by the will of the gods: the conſequence therefore is, that to fight againſt Ulyſſes upon this account, is to fight againſt the gods. Eupithes applies to their revenge, Medon to their fears; Eupithes ſheds tears to move their compaſſion, Medon intimidates them by averring that the aſſiſtance of the gods was viſible on the ſide of Ulyſſes. The perſons likewiſe whom Homer employs to plead againſt Eupithes are well choſen; Halitherſes is a prophet, Medon an herald, and both perſons eſteemed ſacred by their offices; this is the reaſon why the Greeks are ſaid to be ſtruck with awe at their appearance. Dacier, etc.

Who now before him, now beſide him ſtood,
Fought as he fought, and mark'd his way with blood:
In vain old Mentor's form the god bely'd,
'Twas heav'n that ſtruck, and heav'n was on his ſide.
A ſudden horror all th' aſſembly ſhook,
When ſlowly riſing, Halitherſes ſpoke:
(Reverend and wiſe, whoſe comprehenſive view
At once the preſent and the future knew)
Me too ye fathers hear! from you proceed
The ills ye mourn; your own the guilty deed.
Ye gave your ſons, your lawleſs ſons the rein,
(Oft warn'd by Mentor and myſelf in vain)

v. 518. ——— *Halitherſes ſpoke.*] The ſpeech of Medon had a good effect upon the audience; for Homer adds, that the whole aſſembly grew afraid; Halitherſes perceived it, and ſeconds it. He inſiſts upon a new head of perſuaſion, and ſets forth the juſtice of the late action of Ulyſſes: the ſuitors were ſlain, ſays he, for their crimes, and you are guilty for not reſtraining their outrages; and then to deter them from their preſent deſigns, he repreſents their danger in engaging againſt their king. From theſe ſpeeches, obſerves Euſtathius, Homer draws the probability of the future part of the ſtory; he divides the enemy, and wins over almoſt half of their numbers; whereas, had they proceeded unanimouſly, Ulyſſes muſt neceſſarily have periſhed by their power.

It is obſervable, that though Phemius accompanies Medon, yet he is ſilent; the reaſon is, he as it were ſpeaks by the mouth of Medon, he was witneſs to the aſſiſtance of heaven on the part of Ulyſſes, and approves and confirms by his preſence, the truth of his teſtimony. It is thus on the ſtage where the whole chorus was antiently ſuppoſed to ſpeak by the mouth of their prolocutor. Dacier, etc.

An abſent hero's bed they ſought to ſoil,
An abſent hero's wealth they made their ſpoil:
Immod'rate riot, and intemp'rate luſt!
Th' offence was great, the puniſhment was juſt.
Weigh then my counſels in an equal ſcale,
Nor ruſh to ruin. Juſtice will prevail.

His mod'rate words ſome better minds perſuade:
They part and join him; but the number ſtay'd.
They ſtorm, they ſhout, with haſty frenzy fir'd,
And ſecond all Eupithes' rage inſpir'd.
They caſe their limbs in braſs: to arms they run;
The broad effulgence blazes in the ſun.
Before the city, and in ample plain,
They meet: Eupithes heads the frantic train.
Fierce for his ſon, he breathes his threats in air;
Fate hears them not, and death attends him there.

This paſt on earth, while in the realms above
Minerva thus to cloud-compelling Jove.

v. 542. *Minerva thus to cloud-compelling Jove.*] Homer, to give importance to the concluſive action of his poem, introduces Jupiter and Minerva in debate about the event of it. At the beginning of the Odyſſey he deſcribes the gods in conſultation for the re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes: in the concluſion of it, we ſee Jupiter himſelf rewarding the virtue and bravery of Ulyſſes, and decreeing him to reign in peace and tranquillity. This is carried on with great judgment: we are fully ſatisfied, that the action of the Odyſſey is compleated in the happineſs of the hero, when we hear Jupiter giving his ſanction to it. Beſides, it leaves a noble image of the greatneſs of Ulyſſes, and of the whole ſtory of the Odyſſey, upon the reader's mind, when we ſee it is of ſuch a weight as to engage Ju-

May I presume to search thy secret soul?
Oh Pow'r supreme, oh ruler of the whole!
Say, hast thou doom'd to this divided state
Or peaceful amity, or stern debate?
Declare thy purpose; for thy will is fate.
Is not thy thought my own? (the god replies
Who rolls the thunder o'er the vaulted skies)
Had not long since thy knowing soul decreed,
The chief's return should make the guilty bleed?
'Tis done, and at thy will the fates succeed.
Yet hear the issue: since Ulysses' hand
Has slain the suitors, heav'n shall bless the land.
None now the kindred of th' unjust shall own:
Forgot the slaughter'd brother, and the son:

piter in his favour. Thus in imitation of Homer, toward the conclusion of the Æneid, Virgil describes Jupiter and Juno in debate concerning the decisive action between Æneas and Turnus.

v. 553. ——————*Since Ulysses' hand*
Has slain the suitors, heav'n shall bless the land.]

The design of the Odyssey is to shew virtue rewarded, and vice punished; here to introduce this act of justice with the greater solemnity, Jupiter is represented giving his assent to it: "Let there be peace, says that deity, "but let justice be done, and the guilty punished;" the reader must necessarily be satisfied with the equity of the cause of Ulysses, when he hears Jupiter himself directing in it. Besides, this conduct of Homer presents us with an excellent moral; it shews us that the deity is the governour of human affairs, and arbiter of peace and war; as he directs, the scenes of blood are opened or closed, and the words of Homer, Διος δ' ἐτελέιτο βυλη, may be applied to the Odyssey as well as the Iliad.

Each future day increase of wealth shall bring,
And o'er the past, oblivion stretch her wing.
Long shall Ulysses in his empire rest,
His people blessing, by his people blest.
Let all be peace.——He said, and gave the nod
That binds the fates; the sanction of the god:
And prompt to execute th' eternal will,
Descended Pallas from th'Olympian hill.
Now sat Ulysses at the rural feast,
The rage of hunger and of thirst repress:
To watch the foe a trusty spy he sent:
A son of Dolius on the message went,
Stood in the way, and at a glance beheld
The foe approach'd, embattel'd on the field.
With backward step he hastens to the bow'r,
And tells the news. They arm with all their pow'r.
Four friends alone Ulysses cause embrace,
And six were all the sons of Dolius' race:

v. 573. *Four friends alone Ulysses' cause embrace.*] The poet tells us the exact number of the party of Ulysses, which consisted of ten persons under the direction of Dolius. Laertes, and Ulysses: how many were under Eupithes is uncertain, we therefore are at liberty to suppose them more or less superior in number; Medon and Halitherses had withhrawn almost half of his assistants, and by that method reduced the enemy to a greater equality: it is probable that they had no very extraordinary inequality, for the onset is so sudden, that the friends of the dead suitors could not have time to embody; besides it appears, from the sixteenth Odyssey, that of the whole band of suitors, twelve only were Ithacans, the rest came from the adjacent islands, and therefore none of their friends

Old Dolius too his rusty arms put on;
And, still more old, in arms Laertes shone.
Trembling with warmth, the hoary heroes stand,
And brazen panoply invests the band.
The opening gates at once their war display:
Fierce they rush forth: Ulysses leads the way.
That moment joins them with celestial aid,
In Mentor's form, the Jove-descended maid:
The suff'ring hero felt his patient breast
Swell with new joy, and thus his son addrest.
Behold, Telemachus! (nor fear the fight)
The brave embattel'd; the grim front of fight!
The valiant with the valiant must contend:
Shame not the line whence glorious you descend,
Wide o'er the world their martial fame was spread;
Regard thyself, the living, and the dead.
Thy eyes, great father! on this battle cast
Shall learn from me Penelope was chaste.
So spoke Telemachus: the gallant boy
Good old Laertes heard with panting joy;
And, blest! thrice blest this happy day! he cries,
The day that shows me, ere I close my eyes,
A son and grandson of th'Arcesian name
Strive for fair virtue, and contest for fame!

could as yet be arrived to assist Eupithes, and consequently this party consisted solely of Ithacans, and were not perhaps greatly superior to Ulysses. This observation likewise furnishes us with a reason why the enemy was so easily defeated, by so small a body of men as engaged for Ulysses.

Then thus Minerva in Laertes' ear:
Son of Arceſius, rev'rend warrior, hear!
Jove and Jove's daughter firſt implore in pray'r,
Then whirling high, diſcharge thy lance in air.
She ſaid, infuſing courage with the word.
Jove and Jove's daughter then the chief implor'd,
And whirling high diſmiſt the lance in air.
Full at Eupithes drove the deathful ſpear:
The braſs-cheek'd helmet opens to the wound;
He falls, earth thunders, and his arms reſound.
Before the father and the conqu'ring ſon
Heaps ruſh on heaps; they fight, they drop, they run.
Now by the ſword and now the jav'lin fall
The rebel race, and death had ſwallow'd all;
But from on high the blue ey'd virgin cry'd;
Her awful voice detain'd the headlong tide.
"Forbear, ye nations! your mad hands forbear
"From mutual ſlaughter: Peace deſcends to ſpare.
Fear ſhook the nations. At the voice divine
They drop their jav'lins, and their rage reſign.
All ſcatter'd round their glitt'ring weapons lie;
Some fall to earth, and ſome confus'dly fly.

v. 606. *Full at Eupithes drove the deathful ſpear.*] Euſtathius calls this an admirable incident, or change of fortune in favour of Ulyſſes. The ſon of Eupithes is ſlain by the ſon of Laertes, and the father of Antinous by the father of Ulyſſes. We now ſee Ulyſſes happy in his wife, his ſon and his father; victorious over his enemies, and his ſubjects ſubmitting to his authority; and therefore the action is now complete, and terminates with the Odyſſey.

With dreadful ſhouts Ulyſſes pour'd along,
Swift as an eagle, as an eagle ſtrong.
But Jove's red arm the burning thunder aims;
Before Minerva ſhot the livid flames;
Blazing thy fell, and at her feet expir'd:
Then ſtopt the goddeſs, trembled, and retir'd.
Deſcended from the gods! Ulyſſes, ceaſe;
Offend not Jove: obey, and give the peace.
So Pallas ſpoke: The mandate from above
The king obey'd. The virgin-ſeed of Jove,
In Mentor's form, confirm'd the full accord,
And willing nations knew their lawful lord.

v. 630. ——*The virgin-ſeed of Jove,*
In Mentor's form, confirm'd the full accord.]
The meaning of the paſſage is no more than this, when ſtript of its poetical ornaments: Mentor, a perſon of great wiſdom, acts as a mediator between the king and his ſubjects, he regulates the conditions of peace, and ratifies it with ſacrifices to the gods; this being an act of wiſdom, poetry aſcribes it to Minerva.

I muſt obſerve with what dignity Homer concludes the Odyſſey: to honour his hero, he introduces two deities, Jupiter and Pallas, who intereſt themſelves in his cauſe: he then paints Ulyſſes in the boldeſt colours, as he ruſhes upon the enemy with the utmoſt intrepidity, and his courage is ſo ungovernable, that Jupiter is forced to reſtrain it with his thunder. It is uſual for orators to reſerve the ſtrongeſt arguments for the concluſion, that they may leave them freſh upon the reader's memory; Homer uſes the ſame conduct, he repreſents his hero in all his terror, he ſhews him to be irreſiſtible, and by this method leaves us fully poſſeſt with a noble idea of his magnanimity.

It has been already obſerved, that the end of the action of the Odyſſey is the re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes in full

peace and tranquillity, this is not effected till the defeat of the suitors friends: and therefore if the poet had concluded before this event, the Odyssey had been imperfect. It was necessary that the reader should not only be informed of the return of Ulysses to his country, and the punishment of the suitors, but of his re-establishment by a peaceful possession of his regal authority; which is not executed, till these last disorders raised by Eupithes are settled by the victory of Ulysses, and therefore this is the natural conclusion of the action.

This book opens with the morning, and ends before night, so that the whole story of the Odyssey is comprehended in the compass of one and forty days. Monsieur Dacier upon Aristotle remarks, that an epic poem ought not to be too long: we should be able to retain all the several parts of it at once in our memory: if we lose the idea of the beginning when we come to the conclusion, it is an argument that it is of too large an extent, and its length destroys its beauty. What seems to favour this decision is, that the Æneid, Iliad, and Odyssey are conformable to this rule of Aristotle, and every one of those poems may be read in the compass of a single day.

I have now gone through the collections upon the Odyssey, and laid together what occurred most remarkable in this excellent poem. I am not so vain as to think these remarks free from faults, nor so disingenuous as not to confess them: all writers have occasion for indulgence, and those most who least acknowledge it. I have sometimes used madam Dacier as she has done others, in transcribing some of her remarks without particularizing them; but indeed it was through inadvertency only that her name is sometimes omitted at the bottom of the note. If my performance has merit, either in these, or in my part of the translation (namely in the sixth, eleventh, and eighteenth books) it is but just to attribute it to the judgment and care of Mr. Pope, by whose hand every sheet was corrected. His other, and much more able assistant, was

Mr. Fenton, in the fourth and the twentieth books. It was our particular requeſt, that our ſeveral parts might not be made known to the world till the end of it: and if they have had the good fortune not to be diſtinguiſhed from his, we ought to be the leſs vain, ſince the reſemblance proceeds much leſs from our diligence and ſtudy to copy his manner, than from his own daily reviſal and correction. The moſt experienced painters will not wonder at this, who very well know, that no critic can pronounce even of the pieces of Raphael or Titian, which have, or which have not, been worked upon by thoſe of their ſchool? when the ſame maſter's hand has directed the execution of the whole, reduced it to one character and colouring, gone over the ſeveral parts, and given to each their finiſhing.

I muſt not conclude, without declaring our mutual ſatisfaction in Mr. Pope's acceptance of our beſt endeavours, which have contributed at leaſt to his more ſpeedy execution of this great undertaking. If ever my name be numbered with the learned, I muſt aſcribe it to his friendſhip, in tranſmitting it to poſterity by a participation in his labours. May the ſenſe I have of this, and other inſtances of that friendſhip, be known as long as his name will cauſe mine to laſt! and may I to this end be permitted, at the concluſion of a work which is a kind of monument of his partiality to me, to place the following lines, as an inſcription memorial of it!

LET vulgar ſouls triumphal arches raiſe,
Or ſpeaking marbles to record their praiſe:
And picture (to the voice of fame unknown)
The mimic feature on the breathing ſtone;
Mere mortals! ſubject to death's total ſway,
Reptiles of earth, and beings of a day!

'Tis thine, on ev'ry heart to grave thy praiſe,
A monument which worth alone can raiſe:
Sure to ſurvive, when time ſhall whelm in duſt
The arch, the marble, and the mimic buſt:
Nor till the volumes of the expanded ſky
Blaze in one flame, ſhalt thou and Homer die:
Then ſink together, in the world's laſt fires,
What heav'n created, and what heav'n inſpires.
If ought on earth, when once this breath is fled,
With human tranſport touch the mighty dead:
Shakeſpear, rejoice: his hand thy page refines;
Now ev'ry ſcene with native brightneſs ſhines:
Juſt to thy fame, he gives thy genuine thought;
So Tully poliſh'd what Lucretius wrote;
Prun'd by his care, thy lawrels loftier grow,
And bloom afreſh on thy immortal brow.

Thus when thy draughts, O Raphael! time invades,
And the bold figure from the canvaſs fades,
A rival hand recalls from every part
Some latent grace, and equals art with art;
Tranſported we ſurvey the dubious ſtrife,
While each fair image ſtarts again to life.

How long, untun'd, had Homer's ſacred lyre,
Jarr'd grating diſcord, all extinct his fire?

This you beheld; and taught by heav'n to ſing,
Call'd the loud muſic from the ſounding ſtring;
Now wak'd from ſlumbers of three thouſand years,
Once more Achilles in dread pomp appears,
Tow'rs o'er the field of death; as fierce he turns,
Keen flaſh his arms, and all the hero burns;
With martial ſtalk, and more than mortal might,
He ſtrides along, and meets the gods in fight:
Then the pale Titans, chain'd on burning floors,
Start at the din that rends th' infernal ſhores;
Tremble the tow'rs of heav'n, earth rocks her coaſts,
And gloomy Pluto ſhakes with all his ghoſts.
To ev'ry theme reſponds thy various lay;
Here rowls a torrent, there meanders play;
Sonorous as the ſtorm thy numbers riſe,
Toſs the wild waves, and thunder in the ſkies;
Or ſofter than a yielding virgins ſigh,
Then gentle breezes breathe away and die.
Thus, like the radiant god who ſhades the day,
You paint the vale, or gild the azure way;
And while with ev'ry theme the verſe complies,
Sink without groveling, without raſhneſs riſe.

Proceed, great bard! awake th' harmonious ſtring,
Be ours all Homer! ſtill Ulyſſes ſing.
How long* that hero, by unſkilful hands,
Stript of his robes, a beggar trod our lands!
Such as he wander'd o'er his native coaſt,
Shrunk by the wând, and all the warrior loſt:

* Odyſſey, lib. 16.

O'er his ſmooth ſkin a bark of wrinkles ſpread;
Old age diſgrac'd the honours of his head;
Nor longer in his heavy eye-ball ſhin'd
The glance divine, forth beaming from the mind.
But you, like Pallas, ev'ry limb infold
With royal robes, and bid him ſhine in gold;
Touch'd by your hand his manly frame improves
With grace divine, and like a god he moves.

Ev'n I, the meaneſt of the muſes train,
Inflam'd by thee, attempt a nobler ſtrain;
Advent'rous waken the Mæonian lyre,
Tun'd by your hand, and ſing as you inſpire:
So arm'd by great Achilles for the fight,
Patroclus conquer'd in Achilles' right:
Like theirs, our friendſhip! and I boaſt my name
To thine united——For thy *Friendſhip's Fame*.

This labour paſt, of heavenly ſubjects ſing,
While hov'ring angels liſten on the wing,
To hear from earth ſuch heart-felt raptures riſe,
As when they ſing, ſuſpended hold the ſkies:
Or nobly riſing in fair virtue's cauſe,
From thy own life tranſcribe th' unerring laws:
Teach a bad world beneath her ſway to bend;
To verſe like thine fierce ſavages attend,
And men more fierce: when Orpheus tunes the lay,
Ev'n fiends relenting hear their rage away.

W. BROOME.

POSTSCRIPT.

By Mr. POPE.

I CANNOT dismiss this work without a few observations on the true character and stile of it. Whoever reads the Odyssey with an eye to the Iliad expecting to find it of the same character, or of the same sort of spirit, will be grievously deceived, and err against the first principle of criticism, which is to consider the nature of the piece, and the intent of its author. The Odyssey is a moral and political work, instructive to all degrees of men, and filled with images, examples, and precepts, of civil and domestic life. Homer is here a person

Qui didicit, patriæ *quid debeat, et quid* amicis,
Quo sit amore parens, *quo* frater *amandus, et* hospes:
Qui quid sit pulchrum, *quid* turpe, *quid* utile, *quid* non;
Plenius et melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit.

The Odyssey is the reverse of the Iliad, in *moral, subject, manner,* and *stile*; to which it has no sort of relation, but as the story happens to follow in order of time, and as some of the same persons are actors in it. Yet from this incidental connexion many have been misled to regard it as a continuation or second part, and thence to expect a parity of character inconsistent with its nature.

It is no wonder that the common reader should fall into this mistake, when so great a critic as Longinus seems not wholly free from it. Although what he has said, has been generally understood to import a severer censure of the Odyssey than it really does, if we consider the occasion on which it is introduced, and the circumstances to which it is confined.

'The Odyssey, says he, is an instance, how natural it

'is to a great genius, when it begins to grow old and decline, to delight itself in narrations and fables. For, that Homer composed the Odyssey after the Iliad, many proofs may be given, *etc.* From hence, in my judgment, it proceeds, that as the Iliad was written while his spirit was in its greatest vigour, the whole structure of that work is dramatic and full of action; whereas the greater part of the Odyssey is employed in narration, which is the taste of old age: so that in this latter piece we may compare him to the setting sun, which has still the same greatness, but not the same ardor, or force. He speaks not in the same strain: we see no more that sublime of the Iliad which marches on with a constant pace, without ever being stopped, or retarded: there appears no more that hurry, and that strong tide of motions and passions, pouring one after another: there is no more the same fury, or the same volubility of diction, so suitable to action, and all along drawing in such innumerable images of nature. But Homer, like the ocean, is always great, even when he ebbs and retires; even when he is lowest and loses himself most in narrations and incredible fictions: as instances of this, we cannot forget the descriptions of tempests, the adventures of Ulysses with the Cyclops, and many others. But though all this be age, it is the age of Homer——And it may be said, for the credit of these fictions, that they are *beautiful dreams*, or, if you will, the *dreams of Jupiter himself.* I spoke of the Odyssey only, to show, that the greatest poets, when their genius wants strength and warmth for the pathetic, for the most part employ themselves in painting the manners. This Homer has done, in characterizing the suitors, and describing their way of life; which is properly a branch of comedy whose peculiar business it is to represent the manners of men.'

We must first observe, it is the sublime of which Longinus is writing: That, and not the nature of Homer's poem, is his subject. After having highly extolled the sublimity and fire of the Iliad, he justly observes the O-

dyſſey to have leſs of thoſe qualities, and to turn more on the ſide of moral, and reflections on human life. Nor is it his buſineſs here to determine, whether the *elevated ſpirit* of the one, or the *juſt moral* of the other, be the greater excellence in itſelf.

Secondly, that fire and fury of which he is ſpeaking, cannot well be meant of the general ſpirit and inſpiration which is to run through a whole epic poem, but of that particular warmth and impetuoſity neceſſary in ſome parts, to image or repreſent actions or paſſions, of haſte, tumult, and violence. It is on occaſion of citing ſome ſuch particular paſſages in Homer, that Longinus breaks into this reflection; which ſeems to determine his meaning chiefly to that ſenſe.

Upon the whole, he affirms the Odyſſey to have leſs ſublimity and fire than the Iliad, but he does not ſay it wants the ſublime, or wants fire. He affirms it to be narrative, but not that the narration is defective. He affirms it to abound in fictions, not that thoſe fictions are ill invented, or ill executed. He affirms it to be nice, and particular in painting the manners, but not that thoſe manners are ill painted. If Homer has fully in theſe points, accompliſhed his own deſign, and done all that the nature of his poem demanded or allowed, it ſtill remains perfect in its kind, and as much a maſterpiece as the Iliad.

The amount of this paſſage is this; that in his own particular taſte, and with reſpect to the Sublime, Longinus preferred the Iliad: and becauſe the Odyſſey was leſs active and lofty, he judged it the work of the old-age of Homer.

If this opinion be true, it will only prove, that Homer's age might determine him in the choice of his ſubject, not that it affected him in the execution of it: and that which would be a very wrong inſtance to prove the decay of his imagination, is a very good one to evince the ſtrength of his judgment. For, had he, as madam Dacier obſerves, compoſed the Odyſſey in his youth, and the Iliad in his age, both muſt in reaſon have been exactly the ſame as they now ſtand. To blame Homer for his choice of ſuch a

ſubject, as did not admit the ſame incidents, and the ſame pomp of ſtile as his former; is to take offence at too much variety, and to imagine, that when a man has written one good thing, he muſt ever after only copy himſelf.

The *Battle of Conſtantine*, and the *School of Athens*, are both pieces of Raphael: ſhall we cenſure the ſchool of Athens as faulty, becauſe it has not the fury and fire of the other? or ſhall we ſay, that Raphael was grown grave and old, becauſe he choſe to repreſent the manners of old men and philoſophers? There is all the ſilence, tranquillity, and compoſure in the one, and all the warmth, hurry, and tumult in the other, which the ſubject of either required: both of them had been imperfect, if they had not been as they are. And let the painter or poet be young or old, who deſigns and performs in this manner, it proves him to have made the piece at a time of life when he was maſter not only of his art, but of his diſcretion.

Ariſtotle makes no ſuch diſtinction between the two poems: he conſtantly cites them with equal praiſe and draws the rules and examples of epic writing equally from both. But it is rather to the Odyſſey that Horace gives the preference, in the epiſtle to Lollius, and in the Art of Poetry. It is remakable how oppoſite his opinion is to that of Longinus; and that the particulars he chuſes to extol, are thoſe very *fictions* and *pictures of the manners* which the other ſeems leaſt to approve. Thoſe fables and manners are of the very eſſence of the work: but even without that regard, the fables themſelves have both more invention and more inſtruction, and the manners more moral and example, than thoſe of the Iliad.

In ſome points, and thoſe the moſt eſſential to the epic poem, the Odyſſey is confeſſed to excel the Iliad; and principally in the great end of it, the Moral. The conduct, turn, and diſpoſition of the Fable is alſo what the critics allow to be the better model for epic writers to follow: accordingly we find much more of the caſt of this poem than of the other in the Æneid, and (what next to that is perhaps the greateſt example) in the Telemachus. In the

manners, it is no way inferior: Longinus is so far from finding any defect in these, that he rather taxes Homer with painting them too minutely. As to the Narrations, although they are more numerous as the occasions are more frequent, yet they carry no more the marks of old-age, and are neither more prolix nor more circumstantial, than the conversations and dialogues of the Iliad. Not to mention the length of those of Phœnix in the ninth book, and of Nestor in the eleventh (which may be thought in compliance to their characters) those of Glaucus in the sixth, of Æneas in the twentieth, and some others, must be allowed to exceed any in the whole Odyssey. And that the propriety of stile, and the numbers, in the narrations of each are equal, will appear to any who compare them.

To form a right judgment, whether the genius of Homer had suffered any decay; we must consider, in both his poems, such parts as are of a similar nature, and will bear comparison. And it is certain we shall find in each, the same vivacity and fecundity of invention, the same life and strength of imaging and colouring, the particular descriptions as highly painted, the figures as bold, the metaphors as animated, and the numbers as harmonious and as various.

The Odyssey is a perpetual source of poetry: the stream is not the less full, for being gentle; though it is true (when we speak only with regard to the Sublime) that a river, foaming and thundering in cataracts, from rocks and precipices, is what more strikes, amazes, and fills the mind, than the same body of water, flowing afterwards through peaceful vales and agreeable scenes of pasturage.

The Odyssey, as I have before said, ought to be considered according to its own nature and design, not with an eye to the Iliad. To censure Homer because it is unlike what it was never meant to resemble, is, as if a gardiner who had purposely cultivated two beautiful trees of contrary natures, as a specimen of his skill in the several kinds, should be blamed for not bringing them into pairs; when in root, stem, leaf, and flower, each was so entirely different, that one must have been spoiled in the endeavour to match the other.

Longinus, who saw this poem was *partly of the nature of comedy*, ought not, for that very reason, to have considered it with a view to the Iliad. How little any such resemblance was the intention of Homer, may appear from hence, that although the character of Ulysses there was already drawn, yet here he purposely turns to another side of it, and shows him not in that full light of glory but in the shade of common life, with a mixture of such qualities as are requisite to all the lowest accidents of it, struggling with misfortunes, and on a level with the meanest of mankind. As for the other persons, none of them are above what we call the higher comedy; Calypso, though a goddess, is a character of intrigue; the suitors yet more approaching to it; the Phæacians are of the same cast; the Cyclops, Melanthius, and Irus, descend even to droll characters; and the scenes that appear throughout, are generally of the comic kind; banquets, revels, sports, loves, and the pursuit of a woman.

From the nature of the poem, we shall form an idea of the Stile. The diction is to follow the images, and to take its colour from the complexion of the thoughts. Accordingly the Odyssey is not always clothed in the majesty of verse proper to tragedy, but sometimes descends into the plainer narrative, and sometimes even to that familiar dialogue essential to comedy. However, where it cannot support a sublimity, it always preserves a dignity, or at least a propriety.

There is a real beauty in an easy, pure, perspicuous description even of a low action. There are numerous instances of this both in Homer and Virgil; and perhaps those natural passages are not the least pleasing of their works. It is often the same in History, where the representations of common, or even domestic things, in clear, plain, and natural words, are frequently found to make the liveliest impression on the reader.

The question is, how far a poet, in pursuing the description or image of an action, can attach himself to *little*

circumſtances, without vulgarity or trifling? what particulars are proper, and enliven the image; or what are impertinent, and clog it? In this matter painting is to be conſulted, and the whole regard had to thoſe circumſtances which contribute to form a full, and yet not a confuſed, idea of a thing.

Epithets are of vaſt ſervice to this effect, and the right uſe of theſe is often the only expedient to render the narration poetical.

The great point of judgment is to diſtinguiſh when to ſpeak ſimply, and when figuratively: but whenever the poet is obliged by the nature of his ſubject, to deſcend to the lower manner of writing, an elevated ſtile would be affected, and therefore ridiculous; and the more he was forced upon figures and metaphors to avoid that lowneſs, the more the image would be broken, and conſequently obſcure.

One may add, that the uſe of the grand ſtile on little ſubjects, is not only ludicrous, but a ſort of tranſgreſſion againſt the rules of proportion and mechanics: it is uſing a vaſt force to lift a feather.

I believe, now I am upon this head, it will be found a juſt obſervation, that the *low actions of life* cannot be put into a figurative ſtile without being ridiculous; but *things natural* can. Metaphors raiſe the latter into dignity, as we ſee in the Georgics; but throw the former into ridicule, as in the Lutrin. I think this may very well be accounted for: laughter implies cenſure; inanimate and irrational beings are not objects of cenſure; therefore theſe may be elevated as much as you pleaſe, and no ridicule follows: but when rational beings are repreſented above their real characters, it becomes ridiculous in art, becauſe it is vicious in morality. The Bees in Virgil, were they rational beings, would be ridiculous by having their actions and manners repreſented on a level with creatures ſo ſuperior as men; ſince it would imply folly or pride, which are the proper objects of ridicule.

The uſe of pompous expreſſion for low actions or

thoughts is the *true sublime* of Don Quixote. How far unfit it is for epic poetry, appears in its being the perfection of the mock epic. It is so far from being the Sublime of tragedy, that it is the cause of all bombast; when poets, instead of being, as they imagine, constantly lofty, only preserve throughout a painful equality of fustian: that continued swell of language (which runs indiscriminately even through their lowest characters, and rattles like some mightiness of meaning in the indifferent subjects) is of a piece with that perpetual elevation of tone which the players have learned from it; and which is not speaking, but vociferating.

There is still more reason for a variation of stile in epic poetry than in tragic, to distinguish between that *language of the gods* proper to the muse who sings, and is inspired; and that of *men* who are introduced speaking only according to nature. Farther, there ought to be a difference of stile observed in the speeches of human persons, and those of deities; and again, in those which may be called set harangues, or orations, and those which are only conversation, or dialogue. Homer has more of the latter than any other poet: what Virgil does by two or three words of narration, Homer still performs by speeches: not only replies, but even rejoinders are frequent in him, a practice almost unknown to Virgil. This renders his poems more animated, but less grave and majestic; and consequently necessitates the frequent use of a lower stile. The writers of tragedy lye under the same necessity, if they would copy nature: whereas that painted and poetical diction which they perpetually use, would be improper even in orations designed to move with all the arts of rhetoric: this is plain from the practice of Demosthenes and Cicero; and Virgil in those of Drances and Turnus gives an eminent example, how far removed the stile of them ought to be from such an excess of figures and ornaments: which indeed fits only that language of the gods we have been speaking of, or that of a muse under inspiration.

To read through a whole work in this strain, is like

travelling all along on the ridge of a hill; which is not half so agreeable as sometimes gradually to rise, and sometimes gently to descend, as the way leads, and as the end of the journey directs.

Indeed the true reason that so few poets have imitated Homer in these lower parts, has been the extreme difficulty of preserving that mixture of ease and dignity essential to them. For it is as hard for an epic poem to stoop to the narrative with success, as for a prince to descend to be familiar, with diminution to his greatness.

The sublime stile is more easily counterfeited than the natural; something that passes for it, or sounds like it, is common in all false writers: but nature, purity, perspicuity, and simplicity, never walk in the clouds; they are obvious to all capacities; and where they are not evident, they do not exist.

The most plain narration not only admits of these, and of harmony (which are all the qualities of stile) but it requires every one of them to render it pleasing. On the contrary, whatever pretends to share of the sublime, may pass notwithstanding any defects in the rest, nay, sometimes without any of them, and gain the admiration of all ordinary readers.

Homer, in his lowest narrations or speeches, is ever easy, flowing, copious, clear, and harmonious. He shows not less invention, in assembling the humbler, than the greater, thoughts and images; nor less judgment, in proportioning the stile and the versification to these than to the other. Let it be remembered, that the same genius that soared the highest, and from whom the greatest models of the Sublime are derived, was also he who stooped the lowest, and gave to the simple narrative its utmost perfection. Which of these was the harder task to Homer himself, I cannot pretend to determine; but to his translator, I can affirm, (however unequal all his imitations must be) that of the latter has been much the more difficult.

Whoever expects here the same pomp of verse, and the same ornaments of diction, as in the Iliad; he will, and he

ought to be disappointed. Were the original otherwise, it had been an offence against nature; and were the translation so, it were an offence against Homer, which is the same thing.

It must be allowed, that there is a majesty and harmony in the Greek language which greatly contribute to elevate and support the narration. But I must also observe, that this is an advantage grown upon the language since Homer's time; for things are removed from vulgarity by being out of use: and if the words we could find in any present language were equally sonorous or musical in themselves, they would still appear less poetical and uncommon than those of a dead one, from this only circumstance, of being in every man's mouth. I may add to this another disadvantage to a translator, from a different cause: Homer seems to have taken upon him the character of an historian, antiquary, divine, and professor of arts and sciences; as well as a poet. In one or other of these characters he descends into many particularities, which as a poet only perhaps he would have avoided. All these ought to be preserved by a faithful translator, who, in some measure, takes the place of Homer; and all that can be expected from him is to make them as poetical as the subject will bear. Many arts therefore are requisite to supply these disadvantages, in order to dignify and solemnize these plainer parts, which hardly admit of any poetical ornaments.

Some use has been made to this end, of the stile of Milton. A just and moderate mixture of old words may have an effect like the working old abbey stones into a building, which I have sometimes seen, to give a kind of venerable air, and yet not destroy the neatness, elegance, and equality requisite to a new work; I mean without rendering it too unfamiliar, or remote from the present purity of writing, or from that ease and smoothness which ought always to accompany narration or dialogue. In reading a stile judiciously antiquated, one finds a pleasure not unlike that of travelling on an old Roman way:

but then the road must be as good, as the way is antient; the stile must be such in which we may evenly proceed, without being put to short stops by sudden abruptnesses, or puzzled by frequent turnings and transpositions: no man delights in furrows and stumbling-blocks: and let our love to antiquity be ever so great, a fine ruin is one thing, and a heap of rubbish another. The imitators of Milton, like most imitators, are not copies but caricaturas of their original; they are a hundred times more obsolete and cramp than he, and equally so in all places: whereas it should have been observed of Milton, that he is not lavish of his exotic words and phrases every where alike, but employs them much more where the subject is marvellous, vast and strange, as in the scenes of heaven, hell, chaos, *etc.* than where it is turned to the natural and agreeable, as in the pictures of paradise, the loves of our first parents, the entertainments of angels, and the like. In general, this unusual stile better serves to awaken our ideas in the descriptions, and in the imaging and picturesque parts, than it agrees with the lower sort of narrations, the character of which is simplicity and purity. Milton has several of the latter, where we find not an antiquated, affected, or uncouth word, for some hundred lines together; as in his fifth book, the latter part of the eighth, the former of the tenth and eleventh books, and in the narration of Michael in the twelfth. I wonder indeed that he, who ventured, contrary to the practice of all other epic poets, to imitate Homer's lowneſſes in the narrative, should not also have copied his plainness and perspicuity in the dramatic parts: since in his speeches, where clearness above all is necessary, there is frequently such transposition and forced construction, that the very sense is not to be discovered without a second or third reading: and in this certainly he ought to be no example.

To preserve the true character of Homer's stile in the present translation, great pains has been taken to be easy

and natural. The chief merit I can pretend to, is, not to have been carried into a more plausible and figurative manner of writing, which would better have pleased all readers, but the judicious ones. My errors had been fewer, had each of those gentlemen who joined with me, shown as much of the severity of a friend to me, as I did to them, in a strict animadversion and correction. What assistance I received from them, was made known in general to the public in the original proposals for this work, and the particulars are specified at the conclusion of it; to which I must add (to be punctually just) some part of the tenth and fifteenth books. The reader will now be too good a judge, how much the greater part of it, and consequently of its faults, is chargeable upon me alone. But this I can with integrity affirm, that I have bestowed as much time and pains upon the whole, as were consistent with the indispensible duties and cares of life, and with that wretched state of health which God has been pleased to make my portion. At the least, it is a pleasure to me to reflect, that I have introduced into our language this other work of the greatest and most antient of poets, with some dignity; and, I hope, with as little disadvantage as the Iliad. And if, after the unmerited success of that translation, any one will wonder why I should enterprize the Odyssey; I think it sufficient to say, that Homer himself did the same, or the world would never have seen it.

I designed to have ended this postscript here; but since I am now taking my leave of Homer, and of all controversy relating to him, I beg leave to be indulged if I make use of this last opportunity, to say a very few words about some reflections which the late madam Dacier bestowed on the first part of my preface to the Iliad, and which she published at the end of her translation of that poem *.

* Second edition, Paris, 1719.

To write gravely an anſwer to them would be too much for the reflections; and to ſay nothing concerning them would be too little for the author. It is owing to the induſtry of that learned lady, that our polite neighbours are become acquainted with many of Homer's beauties, which were hidden from them before in Greek, and in Euſtathius. She challenges, on his account, a particular regard from all the admirers of that great poet; and, I hope, that I ſhall be thought, as I mean, to pay ſome part of this debt to her memory in what I am now writing.

Had theſe reflections fallen from the pen of an ordinary critic, I ſhould not have apprehended their effect, and ſhould therefore have been ſilent concerning them: but ſince they are madam Dacier's, I imagine that they muſt be of weight; and in a caſe where I think her reaſoning very bad, I reſpect her authority.

I have fought under madam Dacier's banner, and have waged war in defence of the divine Homer againſt all the heretics of the age. And yet it is madam Dacier who accuſes me, and who accuſes me of nothing leſs than betraying our common cauſe. She affirms, that the moſt declared enemies of this author have never ſaid any thing againſt him more injurious, or more unjuſt, than I. What muſt the world think of me, after ſuch a judgment paſt by ſo great a critic? the world, who decides ſo often, and who examines ſo ſeldom; the world, who, even in matters of literature, is almoſt always the ſlave of authority? Who will ſuſpect that ſo much learning ſhould miſtake, that ſo much accuracy ſhould be miſled, or that ſo much candour ſhould be byaſſed?

All this however has happened, and madam Dacier's criticiſms on my preface flow from the very ſame error, from which ſo many falſe criticiſms of her countrymen upon Homer have flowed, and which ſhe has ſo juſtly and ſo ſeverely reproved; I mean, the error of depending on injurious and unſkilful tranſlations.

An indifferent tranſlation may be of ſome uſe, and a good one will be of a great deal. But I think that no tranſlation ought to be the ground of criticiſm, becauſe no man ought to be condemned upon another man's explanation of his meaning: could Homer have had the honour of explaining his, before that auguſt tribunal where monſieur de la Motte preſides, I make no doubt but he had eſcaped many of thoſe ſevere animadverſions with which ſome French authors have loaded him, and from which even madam Dacier's tranſlation of the Iliad could not preſerve him!

How unhappy was it for me, that the knowledge of our Iſland tongue was as neceſſary to madam Dacier, in my caſe, as the knowledge of Greek was to monſieur de la Motte, in that of our great author; or to any of thoſe whom the ſtiles *blind cenſurers*, and blames for condemning what they did not underſtand!

I may ſay with modeſty, that ſhe knew leſs of my true ſenſe, from that faulty tranſlation of part of my preface, than thoſe blind cenſurers might have known of Homer's even from the tranſlation of la Valterie, which preceded her own.

It pleaſed me however to find, that her objections were not levelled at the general doctrine, or at any eſſentials of my preface, but only at a few particular expreſſions. She propoſed little more than, to uſe her own phraſe, to *combat two or three ſimilies;* and, I hope, that to combat a ſimile is no more than to fight with a ſhadow, ſince a ſimile is no better than the ſhadow of an argument.

She lays much weight where I laid but little, and examines with more ſcrupuloſity than I writ, or than perhaps the matter requires.

Theſe unlucky ſimilies taken by themſelves may perhaps render my meaning equivocal to an ignorant tranſlator: or there may have fallen from my pen ſome expreſſions which taken by themſelves likewiſe may, to the ſame prerſon, have the ſame effect. But if the tranſlator had been maſter of our tongue, the general tenor of my

argument, that which precedes, and that which follows the paſſages objected to, would have ſufficiently determined him as to the preciſe meaning of them: and if madam Dacier had taken up her pen a little more leiſurely, or had employed it with more temper, ſhe would not have anſwered paraphraſes of her own, which even the tranſlation will not juſtify, and which ſay more than once the very contrary to what I have ſaid in the paſſages themſelves.

If any perſon has curioſity enough to read the whole paragraphs in my preface, on ſome mangled parts of which theſe reflections are made, he will eaſily diſcern that I am as orthodox as madam Dacier herſelf in thoſe very articles on which ſhe treats me like a heretic: he will eaſily ſee that all the difference between us conſiſts in this, that I offer *opinions*, and ſhe delivers *doctrines*; that my imagination repreſents Homer as the greateſt of human poets, whereas in hers he was exalted above humanity; infallibility and impeccability were two of his attributes. There was therefore no need of defending Homer againſt me, who, if I miſtake not, had carried my admiration of him as far as it can be carried, without giving a real occaſion of writing in his defence.

After anſwering my harmleſs ſimilies, ſhe proceeds to a matter which does not regard ſo much the honour of Homer, as that of the times he lived in; and here I muſt confeſs ſhe does not wholly miſtake my meaning, but I think ſhe miſtakes the ſtate of the queſtion. She had ſaid, the manners of thoſe times were ſo much the better, the leſs they were like ours: I thought this required a little qualification. I confeſs that in my opinion the world has mended in ſome points, ſuch as the cuſtom of putting whole nations to the ſword, condemning kings and their families to perpetual ſlavery, and a few others. Madam Dacier judges otherways in this; but as to the reſt, particularly in preferring the ſimplicity of the antient world to the luxury of ours, which is the main point contend-

ed for, she owns we agree. This I thought was well, but I am so unfortunate that this too is taken amiss, and called adopting, or, if you will, stealing *her* sentiment. The truth is, she might have said *her words*, for I used them on purpose, being then professedly citing from her; tho' I might have done the same without intending that compliment, for they are also to be found in Eustathius, and the sentiment I believe is that of all mankind. I cannot really tell what to say to this whole remark, only that in the first part of it madam Dacier is displeased that I do not agree with her, and in the last that I do; but this is a temper which every polite man should over-look in a lady.

To punish my ingratitude, she resolves to expose my blunders, and selects two which I suppose are the most flagrant, out of the many for which she could have chastised me. It happens that the first of these is in part the translator's, and in part her own, without any share of mine: she quotes the end of a sentence, and he puts in French what I never wrote in English. "Homer, I said, "opened a new and boundless walk for his imagination, "and created a world for himself in the invention of "fable;" which he translates, *Homere crea pour son usage un monde mouvant, en inventant la fable.*

Madam Dacier justly wonders at this nonsense in me; and I, in the translator. As to what I mean by Homer's invention of fable, it is afterwards particularly distinguished from that extensive sense in which she took it, by these words. "If Homer was not the first, who intro-"duced the deities, as Herodotus imagines, into the re-"ligion of Greece, he seems the first who brought them "into a system of machinery for poetry."

The other blunder she accuses me of is, the mistaking a passage in Aristotle, and she is pleased to send me back to this philosopher's treatise of poetry, and to her preface on the Odyssey for my better instruction Now though I am sawcy enough to think that one may sometimes dif-

fer from Ariſtotle without blundering, and though I am ſure one may ſometimes fall into an error by following him ſervilely; yet I own that to quote any author for what he never ſaid is a blunder; (but by the way, to correct an author for what he never ſaid, is ſomewhat worſe than a blunder.) My words were theſe. "As there is a "greater variety of character in the Iliad than in any o-"ther poem, ſo there is of ſpeeches. Every thing in it "has manners, as Ariſtotle expreſſes it; that is, every "thing is acted or ſpoken: very little paſſes in narrati-"on." She juſtly ſays, "That every thing which is "acted or ſpoken has not neceſſarily manners merely be-"cauſe it is acted or ſpoken." Agreed: but I would aſk the queſtion, whether any thing can have manners which is neither acted nor ſpoken? if not, then the whole Iliad being almoſt ſpent in ſpeech and action, almoſt every thing in it has manners: ſince Homer has been proved before in a long paragraph of the preface, to have excelled in drawing characters and painting manners, and indeed his whole poem is one continued occaſion of ſhewing this bright part of his talent.

To ſpeak fairly, it is impoſſible ſhe could read even the tranſlation, and take my ſenſe ſo wrong as ſhe repreſents it; but I was firſt tranſlated ignorantly, and then read partially. My expreſſion indeed was not quite exact; it ſhould have been, "Every thing has manners, as Ari-"ſtotle calls them." But ſuch a fault methinks might have been ſpared, ſince if one was to look with that diſpoſition ſhe diſcovers towards me, even on her own excellent writings, one might find ſome miſtakes which no context can redreſs; as where ſhe makes Euſtathius call Cratiſthenes the Phliaſian, Calliſthenes the Phyſician †. What a triumph might ſome ſlips of this ſort have afforded, to Homer's, hers, and my enemies, from which ſhe was only ſcreened by their happy ignorance! How un-

† Dacier Remarques ſur le 4me livre de l'Odyſſ. pag. 467.

lucky had it been, when she insulted Mr. de la Motte for omitting a material passage in the * speech of Helen to Hector, Il. 6. if some champion for the moderns had by chance understood so much Greek, as to whisper him, that there was no such passage in Homer!

Our concern, zeal, and even jealousy, for our great author's honour were mutual, our endeavours to advance it were equal, and I have as often trembled for it in her hands, as she could in mine. It was one of the many reasons I had to wish the longer life of this lady, that I must certainly have regained her good opinion, in spite of all misrepresenting translators whatever. I could not have expected it on any other terms than being approved as great, if not as passionate, an admirer of Homer as herself. For that was the first condition of her favour and friendship; otherwise not one's taste alone, but one's morality had been corrupted, nor would any one's religion have been unsuspected, who did not implicitly believe in an author whose doctrine is so conformable to holy scripture. However, as different people have different ways of expressing their belief, some purely by public and general acts of worship, others by a reverend sort of reasoning and enquiry about the grounds of it; it is the same in admiration, some prove it by exclamations, others by respect. I have observed, that the loudest huzzas given to a great man in a triumph, proceed not from his friends, but the rabble: and as I have fancied it the same with the rabble of critics, a desire to be distinguished from them has turned me to the more moderate, and, I hope, more rational method. Though I am a poet, I would not be an enthusiast; and though I am an Englishman, I would not be furiously of a party. I am far from thinking myself that genius, upon whom, at the end of these remarks, madam Dacier congratulates my country: one capable of *correcting Homer, and consequently of refor-*

* De la Corruption du Gout.

ning mankind, and amending this conſtitution. It was not to Great Britain this ought to have been applied, ſince our nation has one happineſs for which ſhe might have preferred it to her own, that as much as we abound in other miſerable miſguided ſects, we have at leaſt none of the blaſphemers of Homer. We ſtedfaſtly and unanimouſly believe, both his poem, and our conſtitution, to be the beſt that ever human wit invented: that the one is not more incapable of amendment than the other; and, old as they both are, we deſpiſe any French or Engliſhman whatever, who ſhall preſume to retrench, to innovate, or to make the leaſt alteration in either. Far therefore from the genius for which madam Dacier miſtook me, my whole deſire is but to preſerve the humble character of a faithful tranſlator, and a quiet ſubject.

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